KEEPING A CULTURE ALIVE, 4 | YOUR THOUGHTS, 24 | SLICE OF LIFE, 42

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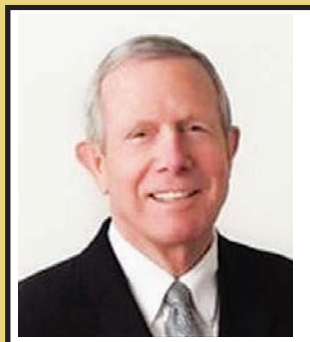

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QUOTE OF NOTE:

"Over the course of them all, I think about how grateful I am for the way things have gone in my life." - *Bruce Sullivan*

See story page 18

ON THE COVER

Local photographer Duffy took this photo in Maine this summer of former long-time Board of Education chairman Helen Stern, sitting, and her daughter, Peggy Stern. This photo won our contest for best summer vacation story and photo to earn its place on page 1.

Submitted photo

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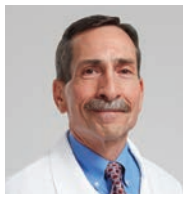

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Glastonbury residents Amit Pathak and his wife Deepa Pathak opened the Creative Learning Arts Academics for You in Rocky Hill in November. This photo was from the school's official inauguration.

Courtesy photo

Keeping the culture alive

Glastonbury couple opens school in Rocky Hill

by Mara Dresner
Staff Writer

Deepa and Amit Pathak met in college in India. Amit found himself falling in love, so he asked Deepa to marry him.

"We were like good friends," he said. "We were not dating. When I proposed to her; it came as a surprise."

"We weren't even at the age where our friends were thinking of marriage," Deepa said. "I was just 18 the first time he proposed. I had two elder sisters still in the pipeline. My first response was, 'No, it's just not possible.' … He kept trying. One day, he decided he was going to my mom directly, without giving me any notice. He said, 'Auntie, I like your daughter, I would like to get married."

The response was not encouraging.

"She said, 'You're too young to discuss this,'" Amit said. "So I called my dad and said, 'Here is the situation. I love this girl. She is good friends with me. She comes from a very good family, a very cultured family. She is also [a] computer genius."

Even though his father had never met Deepa, he was supportive.

"He literally came down to Bombay. We went to her house. My father did the major work, talking and convincing the parents and convincing the girl," Amit said.

That didn't mean the young couple was in for smooth sailing.

"I thought everything was all set," Deepa said. "We are engaged. I'll finish my master's and then get married. Nothing of that worked. We ran into a lot of cultural differences. I come a very conservative Punjabi family. I had a lot of reservations. His family [was] a little more open to dating."

They married when Deepa was 19 and Amit was 21..

"When I got married, I had a realization Amit's family is kind of public figures," Deepa said. "His father-in-law is editor in newspaper; he is a very great social worker in the community as well … Now all of a sudden, I am a public figure. Everywhere I go I was noticed. That created a sense of responsibility. His writings were becoming a big threat to a lot of Mafia gangs there at that time."

They held a family meeting at which Amit's father, Dinesh, said that if he continued writing, his life would be at risk. His family agreed he should not give up his work.

His prophesy came true and he was murdered shortly after.

"The funeral procession for my dad was attended by more than 50,000 people. The whole city was completely closed for the day. Not a single shop or office was open. It was like a curfew. No one wanted to work that day," Amit said.

Fifteen days after his death Deepa took her entrance exam for her master's with police protection. The court cases against those who attacked Dinesh took about two-and-a-half years. Their lives were not safe, and they moved to the U.S. in 1999 when Deepa was hired for a job with AIG, an insurance corporation, in New York.

"We had four pieces of luggage, a four-month-old son and $4,000 in our pocket. That's all of what we had and that's what we started," Amit said.

Their first purchase? A $6 box of Band-Aids when Deepa cut her finger.

"Basically we had to start from scratch. We had a luxurious life back in India. You had maids and servants and drivers around you. I remember the first time had to clean the dishes after cooking; it was a cultural shock," Deepa said.

Amit also worked in technology as well as developing businesses of his own. At one point Deepa came to Connecticut to talk about a project with Travelers Life and Annuity. That turned into a several month-long assignment in which she would stay in Connecticut during the week and return to New Jersey on the weekends. After several months she was offered a full-time position with the company, and the family moved to Newington, and then to Glastonbury two years ago.

"The full-time position was appealing at that time. We needed that level of security. I would be working directly under the CIO. It would be very difficult to say no," Deepa said. "We had a lot of things to look forward to."

Once they were settled, they looked for ways expand their lives beyond work.

"This is where we were missing a beat we had in India, the public life had in India. That was a piece we started missing a lot, the community involvement and lifestyle we had there. Here the only who people knew us were the people in the companies and the neighborhood. We started volunteering for a lot of nonprofit organizations. In doing that a couple things happened. We got the social life we needed; we got that whole sense of giving back to community," Deepa said. "Then we started helping out with cultural events. That's how our involvement started. That journey never stopped. Almost every year got associated with something new."

While they enjoyed that work, Amit began to think about doing something with the arts.

"As the son of a journalist, I had the opportunity to go and enjoy the performances. I don't know how that whole thing came on to me; it transformed me. … I'm now realizing as a child what I heard, what I experienced, I wanted to share this with friends and family, it would make me happier, said Amit, who owns several businesses in the area. "As we were getting associated with nonprofit associations, spreading the rich culture of India, I got a wonderful opportunity in 2011. I was visiting a friend Toronto, Canada. There was a performer coming from where I was born. I knew that performer very well to childhood. We stayed over [so we could see him] and enjoyed it a lot. That started this urge to bring this kind of huge event to the U.S."

Their first event, in 2013 in New Jersey, drew more than 8,000 people.

"That give me immense pleasure, not only organizing the event but sharing and giving the opportunity. People came from 19 states to witness that event," Amit said.

Last year, Amit and Deepa, through their event management company Be United, organized shows in 10 cities; this year they're bringing shows to 14 cities.

Despite the success of the shows, the couple was looking to do something more, such as creating ongoing relationships with some of the celebrities and community leaders they'd met.

"We being the community leaders have a responsibility toward the young generations here in the United States. Somebody has to take the initiative to create the change we need around us."

–Deepa Pathak

With the help of a Rocky Hill man named Venugopal they opened Creative Learning Arts Academics for You last November with Venugopal as the school's director.

"The basic objective is to bring all arts forms under one roof. Instead of the parents running from one town to another getting the best teachers, the basic object is to bring the best teachers from around the

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Amit and Deepa Pathak organize events around the country. They're shown at MetLife Stadium in October 2015.

Deepa Pathak and TV Asia owner HR Shah pose on set at TV Asia headquarters in New Jersey.

state so parents are not running from one town to another," Venugopal said. "We want to ignite. Most kids and parents are not exposed to the art forms. Once they're ignited we want them to join our classes and mold their talents. Once they're molded, we want to showcase their talents. It becomes a complete creative lifecycle, ignite, mold and showcase."

They see using their more experienced students as entertainment as upcoming festivals.

Mohit Gupta, a software professional who lives in Rocky Hill, said her son, Mansh, has been enrolled in both after-school and summer programs. Heading into fifth grade, she said he especially enjoys yoga and math classes offered by Venugopal.

"We were looking for a secure after-care for our son … They give attention to detail which helps learning on an individual level. … My son loves going there," Gupta said.

The Be Creative events also led to a position for Deepa with TV Asia.

"Connecticut's Indian community has so much talent," she said. "It was never showcased on any national channel. I thought it was a great opportunity, that I will have an ability to showcase talent and all good work we're doing. As I started to do it, I found it very fulfilling, going back to my father-in-law's days of journalism."

"It was so fulfilling. Even though sometimes I run into capacity issue, I still want to do it. Anything we do in Indian community, we have now a voice. Personally I grew a lot. It's about giving back to society and upgrading my own skill set," she said.

"We being the community leaders have a responsibility toward the young generations here in the United States. Somebody has to take the initiative to create the change we need around us. This academy is a platform of initiating that change for our young generations going forward," she said.

They are already looking into expanding the school's model to other cities.

"We see it more as a giving back to the community where we came from," Venugopal said. "Back in India, we had a lot of people teaching the culture. [We need to] keep those culture alive and teach those art forms and more importantly, see them learn the culture that we were taught." GL

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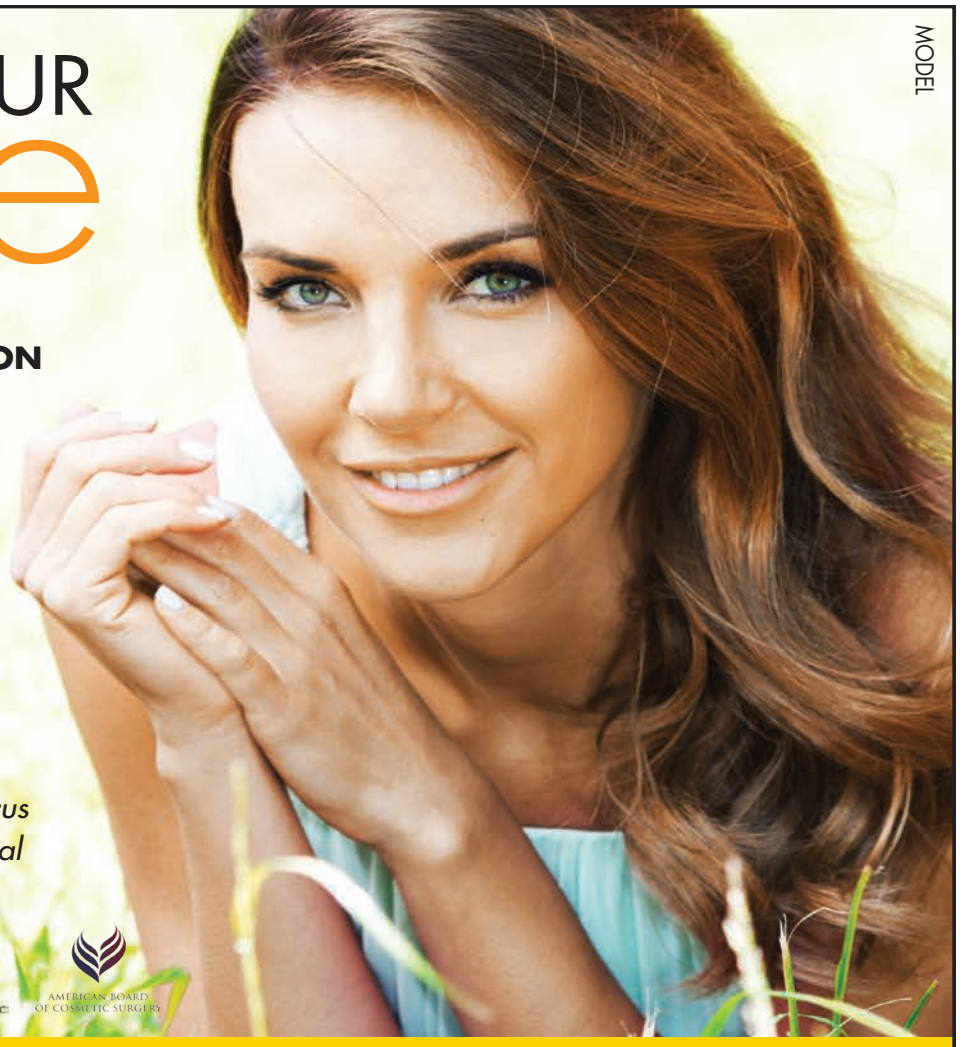

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‘The future of gift wrap’

New fabric sleeves are reusable dozens of times

by Mara Dresner
Staff Writer

First, there was wrapping paper, along with the tape, scissors and a fair amount of requisite dexterity. Next came gift bags, full of fluffy tissue paper, an way to make gift giving a bit simpler for the less coordinated.

Now Linda Longobardi is hoping to once again shift the gift-wrapping paradigm with her new company, Regift The Wrap, LLC.

It’s a way to quickly wrap presents without the use of tape or scissors – and the fabric sleeves can be reused dozens of times, making it an environmentally friendly alternative to disposable gift wrap.

Longobardi had the idea for the product two years ago while enjoying brunch at her mother’s place in Old Saybrook. While the adults were talking in the living room, the kids found their own way of having fun.

“The kids were absolute angels; they were quiet as mice. They were just grabbing random items and wrapping them with tissue paper and tape. When they were done wrapping the gifts, they’d run into the living room and present one of us with it. They were just thrilled to be giving us gifts. Then they’d run back to the porch and start wrapping another one,” she recalled. “I looked down by my feet and saw a heap of crumpled tissue paper and wrapping paper and had that old thought, ‘There’s got to be a better way.’ I love a challenge, and I started making prototypes.”

Longobardi has long been artistic and has had an interior design business in town for 20 years.

“I’ve always been creative. I’ve always been making things, whether it was macramé plant hangers, or painting or sketching. I loved crafts, anything that was

Linda Longobardi has invented a reusable gift wrap.

Photo by Mara Dresner

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crafty. I always say I say I left it behind in the delivery room. When my kids came, my life changed, and I really put that on the back burner. I was always thinking and creating in my head. I was always thinking of a better way to do something; my mind never stops," she said. "Years and years before the CVS's of the world had drive-through pharmacies, I had that idea. I think of ways to do things better. I tend to see things differently."

As she started working on her prototypes, she began researching the toll that disposable wrapping paper takes on the environment.

"That was a big part of it. I've always been concerned about what's happening to our planet between pesticides, GMOs, all those things really do have to start shifting. No matter who you are and what you believe, we need to eat clean food and breathe clean air," she said. "When I started looking into this, we in the United States cut down about 30 million trees in the month of December to make paper gift wrap and bags. I was appalled at that. What was worse than that was that most of that trash would end up in a landfill the next week. So you have people spending a lot of money on paper giftwrap, on bags, on bows, on ribbon, and it all gets thrown out."

It gives you a good feeling that it's going to get passed around for a really long time and not end up in a landfill too quickly."

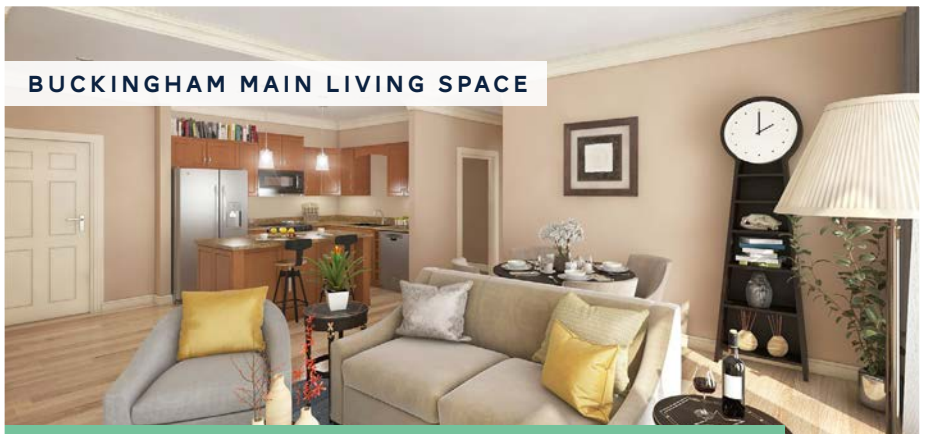
– Linda Longobardi

Despite her longtime love of crafts, Longobardi said it took a while to figure out the actual design.

"I had to get out of my comfort zone. I didn't like to sew and I had to get a sewing machine. I went to Jo-Ann Fabric and got some stretch fabric. I started making them and I liked what I was sewing. It was really fun," she said. "I couldn't figure out how to seal the ends so it looked like a real present. I had this sleeve and I liked what was happening but I couldn't figure out how to tell people how to seal it. It didn't always look neat. It still took a little longer than I wanted it to take [to wrap a gift]. It was probably about six months, seven months, it could have been longer, I woke up one morning and I ran downstairs. I don't know what made me do this. And I thought, 'Oh my goodness, I just nailed it.' It was one of those really fun moments when everything works together."

Having a product she was happy with was just the first step.

"Then I really started revving up and researching manufacturing. I love the creative part of it. If had my choice, I would focus 100 percent on the creative part, but I had to start thinking about if I want to sell it, how to do this. I looked for manufacturing in the United States for five or six months



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without success, so I had to turn to China. They were great," said Longobardi, who is still exploring manufacturing options in the U.S.

The process was an education.

"I just started talking and vetting factories and acquiring samples and one thing led to another and it really started moving along. I realized I had to get acquainted with things like customs and freight forwarders and things like importing and that was a whole other chapter. There are a lot of moving parts," she said, including patents. "I wrote my own provisional patent. Now I have three patents that are pending."

She sought help from a variety of sources, such as UConn law students and professors, and the University of Hartford. She also turned to her friend, Robin Fisher, owner and president of RLF Home in Hartford.

"She was my confidante, every step. She has a great design eye, her own business. For a dear friend with all that knowledge and background to support me was really humbling," Longobardi said.

"I would describe her as very creative with a high taste level and a penchant for making things lovely and beautiful. In addition, her love for family and friends and making the world a better place is tantamount in everything she undertakes. Linda has the persistence to developing an idea that is a new concept [and] makes gift wrapping a breeze with an affordable, beautiful and fun result and is reusable and great for the environment," Fisher said.

The project took about two years to bring to market and was originally called "Outside the Box."

"I really liked it. When I started meeting with lawyers at UConn, we were having trademark issues. One of the professors said, 'I think you have to change the name.' It took me about two months. I wanted it to speak about what we were doing. It ended up being perfect. It's exactly what we're doing. It's part of the gift now. It's a really special part of the gift that doesn't get thrown away," said Longobardi, who can wrap a gift in seconds.

Courtesy photo

Regift The Wrap comes with the fabric sleeve and band. Accessories are sold separately.

Her website includes a demonstration of how to "pinch, tuck and roll" the fabric sleeve.

While she says the wrap can be used more than 50 times, she said that she has done shows where she's used the wrapping more than 100 times. The products are available online and in five shops including two in Glastonbury: Mahogany

New Glastonbury Dentist is keeping it all in the family.

This year has been a big year for DiStefano Family Dentistry. We put the shout out for some help renaming our practice, unveiled a new logo, and now we are officially welcoming a new dentist to our office, Dr. Nick DiStefano.

Yes, we are keeping it in the family. We love being your family dental care provider so it's our pleasure to introduce you to a member of our own family, Dr. John DiStefano's son, Dr. Nick. Dr. Nick may be our newest addition to DiStefano Family Dentistry but he's not new to Glastonbury. Born and bred right here, Dr. Nick graduated from Glastonbury High School and is thrilled to have the opportunity to be back in his hometown to join his father's Glastonbury dental office.

Says Nick, "I am very excited to have the opportunity to return to Glastonbury. I have always enjoyed the comforting feeling the town of Glastonbury gave me. It brings me pride to be able to care for patients in my home town."

Dr. Nick began his quest to become a doctor of dental medicine by earning his bachelor's degree at the University of Notre Dame, his dad's alma mater. And continued to follow his father's footsteps by earning his degree as a doctor of dental medicine from the University of Connecticut. During his journey Dr. Nick found another passion, helping the less fortunate and those in need of dentistry without access to care. Prior to joining DiStefano Family Dentistry, Dr. Nick amassed a record of voluntary service to others through dental mission trips to Guatemala and the Galapagos Islands, where he and his team treated local families with free dental care.

Dr. Nick has also volunteered at the Connecticut Mission of Mercy (CTMOM) in both oral surgery and restorative services. The CTMOM is a free two-day clinic that offers free dental care to underserved and uninsured Connecticut patients, who would otherwise go without dental treatment.

"Being able to provide dentistry to someone who may not otherwise have had any way to receive treatment is what it's all about. I'm so grateful that we are even able to help our own patients that do not have the luxury of dental insurance by providing our in-office dental savings plan to help with the cost of dental treatment. The connection between oral health and overall wellness moved us to create a financial alternative for any budget. No one should have to go without dental care."

Dr. Nick DiStefano

Dr. Nick is proud to join DiStefano Family Dentistry, a group of dedicated dental professionals recognized for their experience and outstanding dentistry in the greater Glastonbury and Hartford area as Hartford Magazine's Top Dentists. He plans to continue his father's over-25-year tradition to serve the community in providing the latest in dental technology and treatments including; replacing missing teeth, revolutionary teeth straightening without braces, and complete dental care for the whole family. You can't pick your family but you can pick your dentist. Here at DiStefano Family Dentistry we're honored to be able to introduce our family, as your new dentist.

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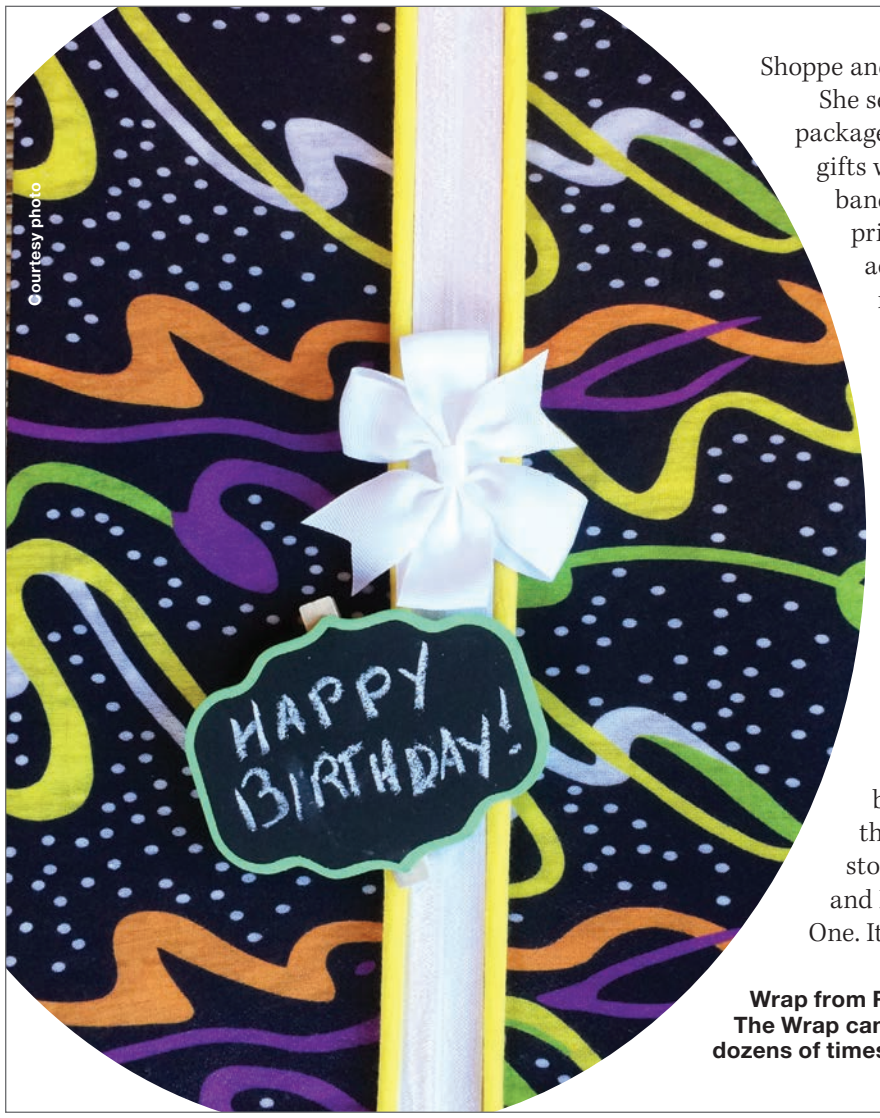

Wrap from Regift The Wrap can be used dozens of times.

Shoppe and Keser's Flowers.

She sells the sleeves in packages to wrap two gifts with coordinating bands. To keep the price down, she sells accessories separately. She also sells a tote bag to hold the products.

She originally thought that the wrap would only be right for a couple of items.

"There are so many boxes in the world. I thought, 'Let me focus on shirt boxes and pant boxes.' Then I took this sleeve to toy stores, to Bed, Bath and Beyond, to Pier One. It was amazing to me how many things I could wrap, from stuffed animals to cheese boards to lanterns. I was getting so excited as I was doing that," she said.

To start out she chose six fabrics to have manufactured.

"It is really fun but it's a little bit daunting. There are just so many beautiful fabrics. I'm trying to predict what people everywhere will like. That becomes a little intimidating. I really just had to go with my gut. I had to pick what I liked and what I thought others would like as well," she said.

She sees licensing opportunities down the road, whether for professional sports teams or high-end shops.

"I really do think it's the future of gift wrap. I really am trying to get people to shift the way they gift."

– Linda Longobardi

Right now, she's simply trying to change the way people think about wrapping presents.

"This becomes part of the gift you're giving. It becomes a really special part of the gift you're giving; it's not the part that gets thrown away any more. It gives you a good feeling that it's going to get passed around for a really long time and not end up in a landfill too quickly," Longobardi said. "I really do think it's the future of gift wrap. I really am trying to get people to shift the way they gift." **GL**

Learn more at regiftthewrap.com.

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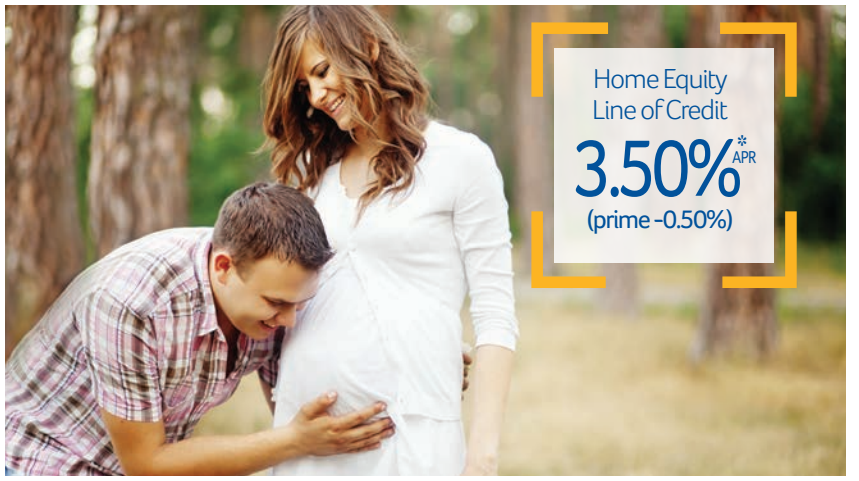

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Nancy Thompson photo

Mike and Amber Smith own the Choppe Shoppe on Main Street.

Setting up Shoppe

Couple with diverse backgrounds opens new salon

by Nancy Thompson
Editor

Amber Assaleh Smith grew up in Montreal as a self-described tomboy. Her husband, Mike, works in corporate security and executive protection. So what are they doing with three upscale hair salons, including one on Main Street?

They're having a great time, loving their work and their businesses, and enjoying their success.

Amber, who grew up in Montreal and speaks English, French and Arabic, says she was a tomboy as a child. She struggled with obesity as a teen until she realized she needed to change her lifestyle and do something to be healthier. She lost 40 pounds fairly quickly and eventually lost 110 pounds. "I was feeling better about myself and started getting into beauty," she said.

When she was about 16 she opened a jewelry kiosk at a Montreal hair salon. She thought she'd enjoy working in the beauty industry and studied to be an aesthetician, a skincare specialist who typically works one-on-one with clients.

"I hated it," she said. "It was just not for me. I didn't want to be alone."

She found a job in telecommunications in Montreal. "I got bored,"

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she said. "I was making good money and enjoyed the perks, but I realized I didn't like that industry." She became certified in tourism and worked for a while for Air Canada. That sparked a desire to see more of the world, so she took a job with a travel company as a destination representative in Mexico. That was the job that changed her life.

"The girls at work asked me to do their hair and makeup and waxing," she said. "The plan was that I was going to return to Montreal, go to school, and go back to Mexico."

Instead, she stayed in Canada and worked in a salon, where, she said, she was "doing it all."

Her father owned some property in Notre-Dame-de-Grace, a residential area on the west side of Montreal, and she renovated some space and opened her own salon. "We turned the place into a little gem and hired an amazing team of stylists," she said. "Within the first six months we were able to pay back our initial investment."

She was thinking about opening a second salon in Montreal when a handsome young man walked in looking for a haircut. He'd asked the concierge at his hotel for a recommendation for a nice place while in the city for a tattoo convention.

"I saw this beautiful woman pouring wine for clients," Mike Smith said. "My first words to her were, 'So this is where the party's at?'"

They exchanged texts, went out while he was in the city and dated for about a year before she moved to Connecticut, where Mike, who has undergraduate degrees in criminal justice and psychology and a master's degree in national security, works in corporate security. They were married last year and Amber became a housewife ... for six months.

"I was climbing the walls," she said. They decided to open another salon – the first to be named The Choppe Shoppe – in Windsor, next door to Mike's mother's bakery. "We knew the place was available as of August, so we gutted it and had it ready in seven days with a grand opening in early September," she said. "Within the first month and a half we had made back our investment and more."

A few months later she noticed a building on Glastonbury's Main Street that had housed a tutoring service and signed up for a lease. "It was cute, but there was a lot of work to be done. It turned out to be a huge project and took from November to spring," she said. The two, working alone, removed walls and carpeting and made substantial improvements to the interior, designing a women's salon on the main floor, complete with flowers and chandeliers, and a men's barber shop on the lower lever with big-screen televisions and a bourbon bar.

"We designed and built everything," Mike said. "We put in every nail in this place. I became kind of a general contractor. I would fly back from London, head for the site and work until 3 a.m. Amber kept my constructions clothes here." The second Choppe Shoppe was born.

In the few months the Glastonbury salon has been open they have developed a dedicated clientele, including Beverly Alves and Tiffany Silkey.

"Amber is a true artist," Alves said. "She loves her work

"I want this to be a comfortable place, safe, a place where people have a good time."

–Amber Smith

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and it shows in every aspect of the business, from the way she styles to the ambience of the Choppe Shoppe. She puts her heart and soul into her work."

Silkey said she appreciates Amber's flexibility and creativity.

"A few times since I started going there I have made mistakes with my appointment times and just showed up, Amber has always worked me into her schedule and making my 'hair and me' a priority and important," she said. "She is very creative and honest and has achieved the color and cut I have always wanted. She is super nice and friendly. I have felt a part of her family since the moment we first met. This is how Amber makes all her customers feel. Each and every-one one of them is important to her and it shows in how she conducts her business and interacts with you."

Amber plans rebrand her salon in Montreal, which she still owns, as La Choppe Shoppe, which will conform with laws in Quebec requiring French names for businesses.

Courtesy photo

The lower level of the Choppe Shoppe offers men amenities such as bourbon and big-screen televisions.

Mike continues to travel for his job and describes himself as "the business side." He's active in one of the local BNI networking groups and enjoys making connections with others in the community.

"I know how to treat people," he said. "You have to give trust to get trust, and you have to look for the right personalities."

Amber shares his philosophy. "Once you find a good team you become a family," Amber said. "I want this to be a comfortable place, safe, a place where people have a good time." GL

The Choppe Shoppe is at 2839 Main Street. To learn more, call 860-430-6704 or 959-999-5193 or visit Choppe Shoppe Glastonbury on Facebook.

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Our Glastonbury store has a new location at 41 Hebron Ave!

Photo by Mara Dresner

After reading "Fly Away Home" in third-grade, Phoebe Rotelli had a clothing drive. In three years she collected more than 1,700 pounds of clothing and accessories, which she's donated to the Second Chance Shop on Hebron Avenue.

'A great conduit for kindness'

Ten-year-old Phoebe Rotelli is first-rate philanthropist

by Mara Dresner
Staff Writer

When Phoebe Rotelli was in Sarah Lieschke-Bodge's third-grade class at Eastbury Elementary School, she read the book "Fly Away Home" as part of a social awareness unit.

"It was about a boy and his father and they lived in an airport and didn't have enough money to have clothes and stuff," Phoebe said.

She was profoundly moved by the story.

"She came home and said she wanted to help. We talked about a good way for her to help," Phoebe's mom, Kiley, recalled.

One of their neighbors, Jeanmarie H. Cooper, is on the board of directors at the The Village for Families and Children, and Phoebe decided to collect clothing from her neighbors to donate to Glastonbury's Second Chance Shop, which supports the ogranization's work.

"I typed up flyers and put them in people's mailboxes," Phoebe said. "We went around in my dad's car. In the flyer it said on this certain date at this certain time, please leave donations at your front doorstep. We kept a list of people we sent flyers to. Then we went to each house. If they did leave clothes, we brought the clothes into the car."

Phoebe, who is now 10 and going into the sixth grade at Gideon Welles School, has been doing the event each year since, and every year has reached more people. Over the past three years, she has collected nearly 1,700 pounds of new and gently used clothing, shoes, accessories and housewares from neighbors, friends and relatives to donate to the Second Chance Shop, a volunteer-run boutique thrift store whose proceeds benefit The Village for Families and Children.

While she fell a little short of her goal to collect 1,000 pounds of clothing this year, collecting 850 pounds, she already collected 300 pounds of clothing and is well on her way to next year's target of

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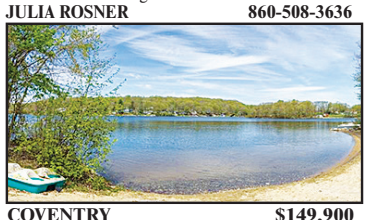

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COLDWELL BANKER RESIDENTIAL BROKERAGE

Ten-year-old Phoebe Rotelli sits amidthe 850 pounds of clothing she collected and donated to the Second Chance Shop, whose proceeds benefit children served by The Village for Families and Children. She's pictured are with JoAnn Adams, director, Marina Stucky, vice chair, and Judy Caron, chair.

Courtesy photo

1,000 pounds.

Word has grown beyond their neighborhood and while they still do the neighborhood drive around St. Patrick's Day each year – when Phoebe originally read the book – people have been donating clothing at other times as well. Phoebe and her family have been dropping off clothing and accessories as they've been piling up, making sure to have the donations weighed to keep her total current.

Last year, the Glastonbury Auxiliary contributed $108,000 to The Village, which serves more than 8,400 children and their families each year in the Greater Hartford area.

"Phoebe is an inspiration to us all," said Galo Rodriguez, president and CEO of The Village. "We are grateful that this remarkable young woman has spent so much time and effort on collecting items for the Second Chance Shop. Her contributions will go a long way to helping the children, adults and families served by The Village achieve real and meaningful change in their lives."

JoAnn Adams, the local shop's manager, agreed. "There aren't enough words to describe Phoebe Rotelli's commitment and determination to help needy children that receive services from The Village," she said. "She is a delightful, amazing child, who is relentless in doing more and more to meet her goal – and then some, always smiling and cheerful. Phoebe should be admired for taking on a challenge that is ever evolving! She is a role model for other students who are interested in community service."

Kiley said the family was invited to visit The Village, including taking a tour.

"I think that impacted her. She was able to see the children there and realize pretty quickly what she was doing was real," she said.

Phoebe, who also enjoys singing and dancing, said that language arts is her favorite subject in school.

She said that she knew from the beginning that she wanted this to be more than a one-time event.

"All my first year, I kind of knew I really wanted to continue it. I know I'm doing such a good thing; I know people really need it," Phoebe said.

The project has grown to include her whole family including dad, Steve, and sister, Lola, 12.

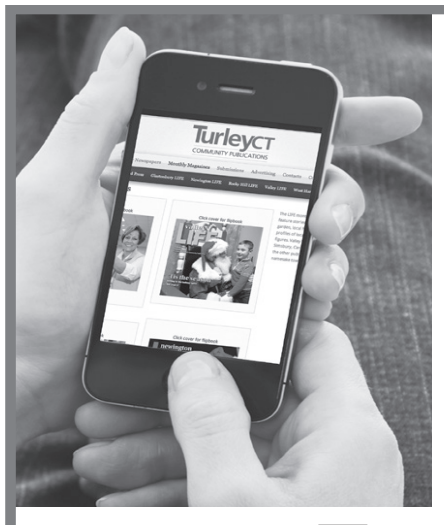
Kiley reflected on how quickly the project took life.

"I remember when she came home and had read that story, she was very upset and I was concerned about what they were reading at school. It moved her. I knew her teacher so well; it was a great way to teach social awareness. The teacher did a great job. It was really sweet and kind. She [Phoebe] wanted to do something make a difference. She was adamant she wanted to do it that day. What could she do to be helpful and make her feel that she was doing something when she was so young? We were lucky our neighbors were so involved with The Village so we knew the Second Chance Shop existed and all proceeds go back to The Village," she said. "Phoebe literally read the book and that night or the next day was printing out flyers. When Phoebe gets something in her mind, she doesn't let it go!"

Phoebe's a popular figure at the Hebron Avenue shop.

"The ladies at the Second Chance Shop are really so kind. They make her feel so special when she does it. It's amazing how much people want to help and don't know how. Phoebe's a great conduit to kindness. It makes her feel good to know what she's doing makes a difference," Kiley said. "She loves to do it. It's like Christmas for her when she shows up at a house and there's a lot of bags; she gets so excited." **GL**

The Glastonbury Second Chance Shop is at 730 Hebron Avenue, 860-633-5188. Learn more at facebook.com/SecondChanceShopsCT or thevillage.org.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Courtesy photo

Bruce Sullivan poses in Bolivia with an animal friend. His first teaching job was in Bolivia.

Wanderlust

Bruce Sullivan is world traveler

by Mara Dresner
Staff Writer

Bruce Sullivan is home, but probably not for very long. While the Glastonbury native loves the town, he's also spent much of his life teaching in exotic places. It's not a path that he planned.

"When I was 15 a buddy and I hitchhiked to New Hampshire and did some rock climbing North Conway, so I was into climbing," he said. "As a kid I was always hiking in the woods and hiking the highest tree, so when a tree company was looking for a climber, it was perfect for me. It was something I really wanted to do. I went from kid stuff to rock climbing to tree work. They all go hand in hand; I still love climbing trees. I love plants and trees so much, I thought, 'What can I do?', so I studied botany. I put myself through school with my tree business, the first company I started, TreeScapes. That was a long time ago."

Sullivan ran his business and went to school, taking 10 years to earn his bachelor's degree from Central Connecticut State University.

"I would work all day, and I went to school at night. I got a degree in biology with an education endorsement. As those years were going by, I thought, 'What am I going to do with a botany degree? Why don't I get a teaching license too?' I had just met through a friend people who were international teachers," he said.

Sullivan's wife, Sharon, also is a teacher and the couple thought that was something they'd like to try.

"The year I graduated we left for Bolivia. It was like serendipity," he said. "It was my first time teaching. I went not knowing anything."

Although Sharon is a Spanish teacher, Sullivan didn't speak any Spanish.

"I can remember the first day getting off the plane. La Paz is at 12,000 feet; Denver is at 5000 feet. Instantly, people are throwing up from altitude sickness. I walk out with a one-year-old, a 135-pound Rottweiler, and the 30 boxes of stuff we took with us. Welcome to third-world living! And there were seven peaks the size of Mount McKinley; it was just phenomenal," he recalled. "It was pretty wild, but I was 27 years old, full of life, full of possibilities. I'm smiling thinking of it."

The couple's middle child was born in La Paz.

"We kept teaching and traveling, Bolivia, Thailand and then we came back. Then I got a little itchy feet again, and we got jobs in a beautiful city, Hong Kong, and we left. We went overseas again, this time with three kids in tow," he said.

In between he would work as an arborist, including at his own company, Sullivan Tree, which he has since sold to his partner.

"After that, we started a nine-year run, India, Germany and Israel. It was beautiful, all my kids graduated overseas in that time, one from India, one from Germany, one from Israel," he said.

He spent four years in Israel.

"I fell in love with the Mediterranean living, hummus on the beach. We'd come home from school and squeeze pomegranates from our tree and have cocktails in the garden," he said.

They lived outside of Netanya until last year, when they decided to return to Glastonbury.

"My youngest is at UCONN; my oldest daughter is at the University of British Columbia; my son is living in California. It was a long way away from all of us, so I decided to take a little break. We maintained a house here and would come home

every summer. It was important for the kids. We moved a lot so we would come home and pop in, pop out and go back [overseas]," Sullivan said.

Now they're trying to decide their next move.

"Last month we were offered a dream job and we actually turned it down," he said of a position in Katmandu. "Their school starts in early August and it would have been a rush for us. I'm just sitting happy to be here, exploring our options. I'm hoping to go south, Nicaragua, Guatemala, Colombia. And I'm working with my best friend, Michael Presta. I'm feeling very fortunate the way things have worked out so far."

"Bruce is one of the easiest people on earth to get along with. When he enters a room, you will rarely find a person without a smile to acknowledge his presence. His outgoing personality, people seem to gravitate to always. Bruce, in this small town never needs an introduction because he knows everyone here anyway. Either through tree work, teaching or other social events, he is always a very popular figure in our town," Presta, president of Minnechaug Tree and Landscape Inc., said. "He truly is my brother from another mother. I cherish him and his family just as much as I do my own."

Presta said Sullivan still has his tree skills.

"Being a Connecticut licensed arborist, he has most if not all the answers to common homeowner tree issues. Bruce can prune anything from roses to redwoods. He started climbing at a very young age and can still shimmy a big oak tree like a brown bear!" Presta said.

He said there have been some special advantages to being Sullivan's friend.

"Traveling for Bruce and the Sullivan family is not only beneficial for him and his family, but

Teacher and arborist Bruce Sullivan poses with new friends in Nagaland, India.

Courtesy photo

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for his friends as well. He has seen the entire world with his entire family most of the time. For me or any other lucky friends when visiting the Sullivans abroad, we have a free place to stay, an in-house tour guide that knows the lay of the land and a host that always has the most," Presta, who most recently visited the family in Germany and Israel, said.

While Sullivan is enjoying his time in Glastonbury, he knows he'll be back on the road.

"We needed to take a step back. It's good to be home. It's been a nice year, but we're both kind of itchy now. It's kind of addictive," he said.

He said there have been a lot of advantages to his nomadic lifestyle.

"The people we've met, the cultures we've gotten to see close up, the foods, the celebrations, the friends. My daughters' friends are from all over the world; we're talking kids from every culture, every language. Our kids went to our schools for free, top-notch international schools. We never missed a school play or basketball game or anything," he said.

But that doesn't mean there haven't been trade-offs.

"It's the balance of exciting, exotic, exhilarating versus family and home. People are like, 'Oh my God, you have the most incredible life.' We've missed a lot of weddings and anniversaries and funerals. That's been the hardest challenge," he said.

In addition to looking for their next opportunity in the teaching world – in Central or South America – and working for Minnechaug Tree, Sullivan teaches an adult ESL class twice a week.

"[I] find it very rewarding. My students are from Columbia, Venezuela, Ecuador, Peru, China and Japan. My past exposure to many of their cultures and aspects of their languages seems to give me a connection to them that is a two-way street of respect; it keeps me connected," he said.

He's been enjoying time in town.

"I still a lot of my friends here; I grew up here. We live in the center of town and ride our bikes around. I see people I haven't seen 25, 30 years. They think I live here. They have no idea I just got back here. You don't tell your life story when you see someone," he said.

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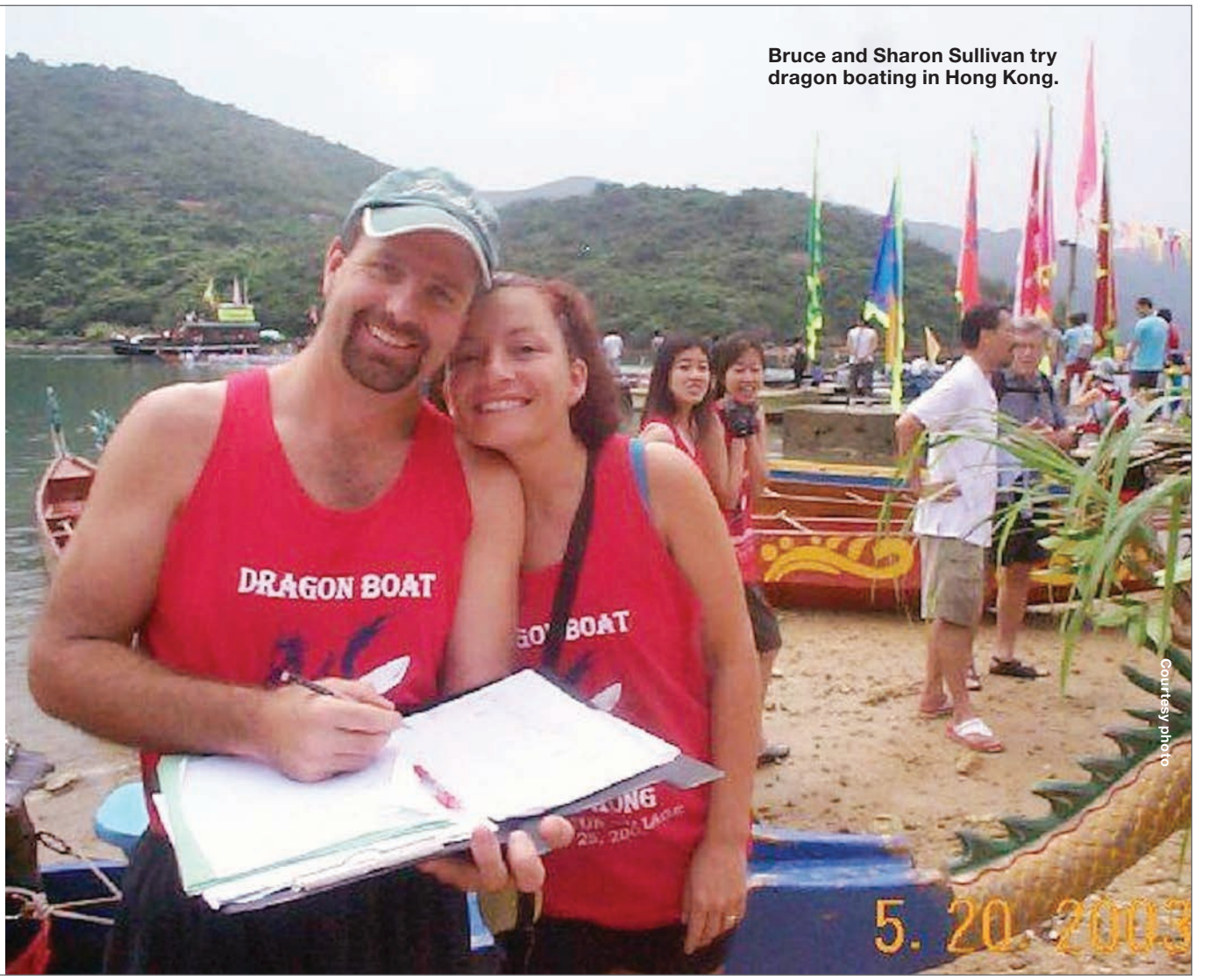
"The hometown gets small and that's when we get itchy. We call it 'the itch.'"

He naturally encourages people to travel – and to think about world events with a critical eye.

"Don't believe everything you see on CNN. Take a step back. There was a shooting on the West Bank? There were 10 shootings in Hartford and 40 shootings in Chicago," he said. "Do what you feel safe and happy with. America is most beautiful country in the world. When I was 16 I hitchhiked from here to Montana and back. This is the most beautiful country in the world; I truly believe it. You don't need to travel far to see amazing places."

No matter where he travels, Sullivan said one thing is always true.

"Over the course of them all, I think about how grateful I am for the way things have gone in my life. Family and friends are what anything is all about," he said. "Wherever we have lived around the world, the best times occurred when all five of us were together." **GL**



Bruce and Sharon Sullivan try dragon boating in Hong Kong.

Courtesy photo

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People Notes

Courtesy photos

Lanny Pfeifer

Lany Pfeifer, a certified public accountant, has been reappointed to serve as member-at-large of the advisory council for the Connecticut Society of Certified Public Accountants. She is a manager with Barron, Yanaros & Caruso in Wethersfield.

Taylor Barbieri and **Brynn Campbell** received the Fifth Annual Margaret Wilcox & Associates scholarships. Wilcox is affiliated with William Raveis Real Estate.

Larry Newquist was the lead contractor and Kimberly Levin was the designed for the September 23 episode of NBC's "George to the Rescue". The show will air locally on NBC CT at 5 a.m. and 7:30 p.m.

Christopher Copeck made the dean's list at Saint Joseph's University.

Douglas A. Brown has been elected president of the Glastonbury Rotary Club. He is a vice president at Welles Fargo Advisors.

Brett E. Suriner, Chirag Patel and **Cassie Emma Pacifici** graduated from the University of Rhode Island.

Matthew Holdaway, Sydney Keane, Laila King and **Madison Shapiro** made the dean's list at Union College.

Nadiya Anderson

Taylor Barbieri receiving the Fifth Annual Margaret Wilcox & Associates scholarship

Douglas A. Brown, president of the Glastonbury Rotary Club

Adam Fowles graduated from Rochester Polytechnic Institute.

Erin Perry made the dean's list at the State University of New York, New Paltz.

Nadiya Anderson has been appointed community manager for Upward Hartford.

Kelsey Hawkins made the dean's list at Loyola University.

Cassie George and **Sophie Vredenburg** appeared in The Teen Musical Ensemble's production of Pippin at Hartford Stage in August.

Megan Sadlon graduated from Hofstra University.

Diana Sparks has graduated from Ithaca College, where she made the dean's list for the spring semester.

Lisa Turcott-Gutt graduated from Fort Lewis College.

Joe Doyle, Luke McNabb, Eli Cooper and **Max Hummel** made the dean's list at Bates College.

Colleen Garlick has joined Hassett & Donnely, P.C., an insurance defense trial practice firm. She received her J.D. from the Michigan State University College of Law. GL

Cassie George

Sophie Vredenburg

Colleen Garlick

Your thoughts

Back to school is a time of mixed emotions for both parents and children. We wanted to hear what makes you happy and what makes you a little sad about the start of the school year. Here's some of what you said:

Lisa Desmarais with Josephine, fifth grade; and Allison, sixth grade

Josephine Desmarais, Age 11

Starting grade 5 at Gideon Welles School

The best thing is being able to choose ice cream and more lunch options this year. My sister was at Gideon last year and the menu is expanded compared to elementary school; sometimes they even will get two lunch choices!

The worst thing is taking tests. I especially dislike the math fact fluency testing that's done at the start of the year.

Allison Desmarais, Age 12

Starting grade 6 at Smith Middle School

The best thing is meeting new people. Last year at Gideon I made some new great friends, enjoyed all my teachers and even reconnected with friends from preschool.

The worst thing is taking tests because I know how much studying it will involve for me to get good grades.

Lisa Desmarais, mom

The best thing is volunteering and becoming more involved at my daughters' schools.

The worst thing is saying goodbye to more leisurely days with my family and instead getting used to a more structured schedule, preparing lunches and meals ahead of time, and figuring out who has to be where and at what time and how I can make that happen!

Courtesy photos

Kiley Rotelli with her daughter, Phoebe, six grade

Phoebe Rotelli, Age 10

Starting grade 6 at Gideon Welles School

The best thing is seeing friends.

The worst thing is taking tests.

Kiley Rotelli, mom

The best thing is hearing about what they learned at school.

The worst thing is hearing about what they learned on the bus!

Front to back: Farrah, sixth grade; Soleil, first grade; Anabella, sixth grade; Hudson, first grade; and their mom, Lisa Blancato

Anabella Blancato, Age 11

Starting grade 6 at Gideon Welles School

The best thing about heading back to school is that I will be reunited with my good friends from elementary school and I'll have a chance to make new friends at GWS.

The worst thing about going back to school is the thought of summer ending.

Farrah Blancato, Age 11

Starting grade 6 at Gideon Welles School

The best thing about going back to school is shopping for new things, like school supplies, clothes and backpacks, all for a fresh new start!

The worst thing about going back to school is wondering about how much homework I'll be getting this school year! Meeting new people can be a bit nerve racking too!

Hudson Blancato, Age 6

Starting grade 1 at Buttonball Lane School

The best thing about going back to school is that I get see all of my friends again!

The worst thing about going back to school is getting up early in the morning. I can't sleep in.

Soleil Blancato, Age 6

Starting grade 1 at Buttonball Lane School

The best thing about starting school is meeting my new teacher.

The worst thing about going back to school is that I won't be able to see my older sisters on the bus or in school anymore because they're going to a different school this year.

Lisa Blancato, mom

The best thing about the kiddos going back to school is that we won't have to worry about how to keep them entertained hours on end.

The worst thing about our crew going back to school is that we'll be back to a rigid routine; no more sleeping in, wearing our pajamas until noon or planning out our adventure for the day. **GL**

Nancy Thompson photo

Plans are under way for the closing of Eastbury Elementary School on Neipsic Road at the end of the upcoming school year.

Bright spots amid cuts and uncertainty

2017-18 school year poses challenges

by Nancy Thompson
Editor

The coming school year will be a challenging one, but not without its bright spots.

Financial uncertainty, mostly about how much state aid will be given to the town, along with cuts in the school board's proposed budget, have resulted in personnel cuts and reductions in funding for some hoped-for updates and improvements.

"We cut the technology budget," Superintendent Alan Bookman said. "The labs are getting old. And we cut some teaching positions, so some classes will be bigger. Our director of technology left and we didn't replace him. It holds you back a little. You don't have people doing things they normally do."

Budget constraints could become apparent in the school system's everyday operations.

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“It holds you back a little. You don’t have people doing things they normally do.”

- Alan Bookman

“I’m not sure we will have money for ink for the copiers and printers,” Bookman said. “We may not have enough for the whole year. Hopefully technology will help.”

He added, “I’m not whining. Sometimes finances are tight and you have to do your very best with what you’re given, but not knowing that the state is doing is harmful.”

The closing of Eastbury Elementary School next June also will be on school officials’ minds as the year begins. The town is consolidating its elementary schools because of a declining trend in enrollment.

“This coming year we have to plan for actually doing this,” Bookman said of the closure, which will result in hundreds of students and several staff members being relocated.

“We’ll have lots of field drips to new schools so the students can meet the principals and teachers,” he said, adding that he is aware that moving to a new school can have an emotional impact on children. “We did this when we built Nayaug. Some Hopewell students went to Nayaug and some Eastbury students went to Hebron Avenue then.”

Despite all this, there is some good news.

A state-of-the-art science lab at Glastonbury High School, funded through a $100,000 grant from the Glastonbury Education Foundation, is scheduled to open on the first day of school.

Known as the CREST lab, short for the Center for Robotics, Engineering, Science and Technology, the center will be equipped with cuttine-edge technology and specialized equipment similar to what is found of college campuses, including a 3-D printer and a special computer system to support it, coding equipment, digital comparison microscopes, equipment for DNA analysis and a variety of fabrication tools.

Nancy Thompson photo

The CREST lab, short for the Center for Robotics, Engineering, Science and Technology, is expected to be up and running when school starts. It is being equipped through a $100,000 grant from the Glastonbury Education Foundation.

The equipment has been ordered and will installed in an existing science laboratory at the high school by the time school opens.

Bookman mentioned other good news as well.

While there are no new initiatives, local schools now have tablets available for every child. “Kids are computer-literate when they show up,” he said. At the elementary school level, each classroom has enough tablets for all students, and beyond that level students have use of a tablet all year. The iPads, which are replaced every three years under an existing contract, have embedded restrictions to ensure that students can’t visit inappropriate websites.

In terms of curriculum, local schools have adopted all the Common Core standards for the state. “They’re very good, very strong and very demanding,” Bookman said. “We have a degree of satisfaction that we’re heading in the right direction.” **GL**

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OF GREATER HARTFORD

‘The place to find what you didn’t know you were looking for’

New gift shop features local artisans

by Mara Dresner
Staff Writer

Robbie Layne makes decoupage birdhouses and painted flower pots, among the many items sold at Finders Keepers, a shop she owns with her daughter-in-law that features the work of local artisans.

Photo by Mara Dresner

Mother-in-laws are frequently the butt of jokes and cause for griping, but Brenda Durel has no cause for complaint with her husband’s mother, Robbie Layne. In fact, the pair are so close that last November, they opened Finders Keepers together.

“I’m a crafter at heart,” said Durel, who owned a home day-care in Lebanon for 20 years. “After my daycare closed, I was retired. During daycare, that [art] was my thing with the kids. We did the typical picture frames and during Christmas we made bread; we just did a lot of crafting. When I retired I was bored, so I got an embroidery machine for Christmas and it began. Then I didn’t really have an outlet to do anything with them, so I did craft shows. I got to the point I had so much, I needed help. My mother-in-law Robbie offered to help and we began doing them together. It got to be too much. We were doing them every weekend, so I was like, ‘Let’s open a store to do

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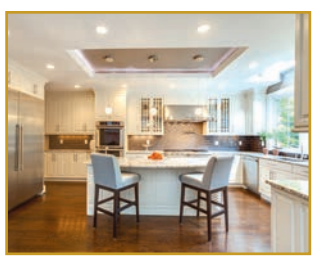

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"The gifts are made with caring and thought. It's not mass produced. Which gives the gift more meaning."

–Brenda Durel

this. We can have our stuff in it and have another place for other local artisans to display their wares,' and so it began."

It took them a while to find their location. Durel lives in Marlborough and Layne lives in West Hartford.

"We weren't limited to Glastonbury. We looked everywhere. Our main focus was a location where we were in between where I live and where Robbie lives so it was convenient for both of us," Durel said.

It took about two years to bring the idea to life; the shop officially opened last November.

"The concept was to open a store where local artisans can display their wares that would be open seven days a week. It's like having a craft show all the time; it's just an outlet for local artisans," Durel said.

About 70 artisans currently have work in the shop; all but two are from Connecticut. While the majority of items are artisan-made, there are also some select vintage collectibles.

"There's jams and jellies to candles and home décor. There's everything that you can imagine if it's handmade," Durel said.

Both Layne and Durel have a number of items in the store.

"I have embroidered items which is beach towels and hand towels. I have crocheted items. I have some vintage collectibles. I have legging. I have some jewelry, crochet wire jewelry. I do a lot of sewing. I have throw pillows. I have adult clothing protectors. I'm trying to think what I don't have. I have a lot of stuff. That's why it was difficult to do the craft shows," she said.

Durel handles accounting for the store and Layne contacts the prospective artisans; you'll find either of them in the shop.

Durel said there haven't been any challenges with being in business with her mother-in-law.

"We talked right in the beginning that if we have any kind of issue, we have to put aside that we're family and resolve it," she said.

"We get along really well. I don't honestly recall any time we've had a major disagreement. The fact that we both love my son gives us common ground. I'd give her the store before I let that affect our relationship. I do this for fun. I don't do this because I have to," Layne said.

Her items in the shop include decoupage birdhouses and painted flower pots.

"It's just little stuff just to keep my hand in it. I mostly [do it] on my days off if it's rainy and my choices are clean the house or do something fun. Clearly house-cleaning loses. My kids are grown; I live alone; I can just do it when I feel like it," she said.

Layne worked in the insurance industry for about 30 years, at one point as a vice president with 200 people working for her. She said while her family was artistic, she basically learned how to do crafting on her own.

"My mother didn't know how to do any of that. I learned how to crochet, knit, needlepoint, flower arranging. I found it interesting and fun and creative. Sometimes from friends, sometimes just figuring it out, sometimes I'd read the directions; this was long before the internet," she said. "Brenda was doing craft shows and I started helping her, minor help, and then it was, 'We'll schlep this stuff to a craft show and sit there all day and pack it all back up.' I'm too old for this. It's hot and it's raining or everyone is eating snacks. There's got to be a better way. She and I were talking and it kind of occurred to us. I don't remember who said what. Craft season is very short. Come winter, they're just sitting around. This is a venue for those folks, and it solved our problem of dragging things around."

Durel also likes to create as the mood strikes her.

"I don't care to have to do it,

to feel I have to create something because it's my day off," she said. "I got up at 6 o clock this morning and made something before I came into work. I made something because that was my outlet. I don't want my passion to become a 'job.'"

Layne came up with the name of the store.

"We went through a lot of names. I heard it and said, 'Yep, that's it.' If you want to purchase this, get it now because I might not ever make it again so it's 'finders keepers, losers weepers,' if you don't get it then. So it was just a perfect name," Durel said.

Finders Keepers is also committed to doing charity events, and has already done events to make handmade knit/crocheted preemie hats for local hospital neonatal intensive care wards and a pet adoption event to support the Protectors of Animals in East Hartford.

"We feel strongly about giving back to the community," Layne said, adding that the preemie event had special resonance. "That was so important because it was done in memory of my granddaughter, Wilhelmina June, who lived a brief 12 days this past winter. We wanted to give back to the NICU where she was, for all the incredible effort and kindness they put forth every day. The next event is because we are both animal lovers and know all those furry friends waiting need a forever home."

Artisans rent space in the shop, and they feature an artisan of the month on their Facebook page and in the front window.

"It's a great place for finding thoughtful unique gifts. It's like a brick and mortar Etsy," said Marian Scott of East Hampton.

While Scott has purchased kitchen towels, jewelry, home decor and organic tea blends, one purchase stands out: a music box in the form of a glass door knob with angel wings that plays "Somewhere Over the Rainbow."

"I purchased this as a housewarming gift for a friend and client who I am representing in the building of a new home. After losing a child, she decided to sell her home and build a new home. I look forward to giving this gift," Scott said.

Brenda Durel shows off an adult bib, one of a number of items she's made that are featured in Finders Keepers, a shop she opened with her mother-in-law.

Photo by Mara Dresner

That's the type of story Durel likes to hear.

"The gifts are made with caring and thought. It's not mass produced. Which gives the gift more meaning," she said.

They're always adding in new artisans. Layne said you never know what you'll find when you stop in.

"It is the place to find what you didn't know you were looking for. One of those 'oh my goodness' or aha moments when you see it. We have things in here I didn't even know existed and they're fantastic," she said. "It's the one place where you can see local artisans' work on display every day of the week, regardless of the season." **GL**

Finders Keepers is at 3045A Main Street, 860-633-4438, finderskeepers-glastonbury.com.

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Susan Davies Sit pores over book listing thousands of Welsh families with Lowri Jones at a recent meeting of her monthly genealogy group.

Putting meat on the bones

Susan Davies Sit shares her love of genealogy

by Nancy Thompson
Editor

For some, genealogy is all about names and dates. For Susan Davies Sit, a local woman whose pride in her Welsh heritage has led her to become an expert in genealogy, the fun part is putting "meat on the bones."

As part of that work, Sit conducts a monthly session in which she helps others of Welsh descent trace their ancestors.

The meetings, which are open at no charge to members of the Western New England Welsh Society, of which Sit is president, and to others for a small fee, take place at her home and include time for general conversation and often a presentation about a specific element of genealogical research.

A recent meeting started with Lowri Jones, a newcomer, talking about her interest in learning about her ancestors as a way to continuing the work of her mother, who died earlier this year. Jones, who came from Wales with her family when she was 5 years old, said she is creating a website for her family.

Others, some of whom traveled from Massachusetts and the far corners of Connecticut, shared their

own family stories and their feelings about searching the past.

"The thought of 'old' has a whole new meaning, the idea that life predates where we are today by eons," said Susan Jenkins Meers of Pawcatuck. Others talked about their grandparents and how they wish they'd asked them about the old days while they were alive or how they felt the first time they visited their family's' homeland.

"It's sad that when we were growing up and our grandparents were around we didn't think to ask questions," Sit said.

They shared information about family names and how their Welsh ancestors often had similar first and last names, such as Morgan Morgan, or John Johnson. "The six top Welsh names are represented in this group," Sit added. "We're hard-core Welsh."

Karen Johnson described how her great-grandfather came from Wales and how the family eventually settled in Glastonbury. "I don't know how he got here," she said.

Before breaking for a pot-luck lunch, Sit did a presentation about new technology and the use of DNA in genealogy, drawing a chuckle when she mentioned the Ancestry.com TV ads with a man talking about how he'd grown up wearing lederhosen and thinking he was German and then, after learning about his Scottish ancestors through the company's DNA test realized he should be wearing a kilt.

"It's sad that when we were growing up and our grandparents were around we didn't think to ask questions."

–Susan Davies Sit

"Ethnicity is important," Sit said. "I've tried to find out about DNA for the layperson."

She explained the various kinds of DNA testing, including autosomal, the most common, yDNA, which traces only male lineage, and mitochondrial, or mtDNA, which traces only maternal chromosomes.

Johnson, who has known Sit for a little more than a year, enjoys the monthly groups. "I joined the Welsh Society of Western New England in search for information to help in finding my great-great grandfather from Wales," she said. "Susan has genealogy research days at her home, most times, the last Saturday of the month. It's an all-day thing and all of the members share in bringing lunch. The members that attend these meetings are so nice, friendly, sociable and helpful. Susan is so knowledgeable in so many ways in finding information. Where there is a challenge she will search and search over and over again trying to find sources for us to search."

She said she became interested in genealogy in the 1970s when she found a family Bible. "I started early," she said. "Most people don't start until they're in their 50s.

She started helping three other members of the society several years ago. "The four ladies would get together. That's how it started, just four fiends getting together. Welsh genealogy is so different and difficult, but we made lots of progress and they were thrilled." A couple of years ago others started joining their little group, which now has about nine regular members.

"Most of their families are from South Wales, coal miners who went to Pennsylvania for the mines in the 1800s or to the slate miles in Vermont and New York near Putney."

She sees her work with the group as a helper. "My job is to guide them into research tips and help them find their Welsh ancestors by starting with Americans and working backwards," she said. "I know the Welsh records, the census, and I can read and speak Welsh. Everyone wants to go back as far as they can,

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Courtesy photo

Susan Sit's interest in her native Wales and in genealogy has prompted her to help others find their roots.

but it's hard to go past the 1800s."

In part, that's because names often are carried through several generations, so David Williams may be the name of a grandfather, a father, a son and an uncle, and also because of the scarcity of records and confusion about last names stemming from a decision by the English in 1837 to require Welsh records to adhere to the English format. "When they added a surname for the record book they often used the father's first name as the person's last name," she said.

And, to make research even more difficult, some Welsh names were changed as they evolved. "Ap" in Welsh means "son of," so Richard Barnabas's son, Samuel, would be known as "Samuel ap Richard," and eventually as Samuel Pritchard, a name with no apparent connection – at least to the neophyte – to Barnabas.

In addition to her work with the Western New England Welsh Society and the monthly group, Sit does private research for clients here and abroad.

"People want me to do the work," she said. "I sit down with them for an hour and then do research for them. The clients say how much they want and how far back. I ask for priorities, such as maybe where their great-grandfather came from, or they heard a story about Halifax, or Syria. We create bullet points of what they want to find out," she said, adding that she specializes in Wales, Scotland and England.

Margaret Barratt, who lives in the United Kingdom, is one of Sit's clients.

"Over the years I have learned sparse details about my ancestry from other family members, but the information did not fit together coherently, she said. "This led me to seeking the services of a professional genealogist, to ensure that the information I received was entirely correct. I contacted Susan Davies Sit on the recommendation of a very close friend. I expected Susan's findings to be interesting but was astounded and delighted by the deeply researched and extensive results she produced for me. Susan unearthed details of my English great grandfather living in Syria in the mid-1800s and found photographs of his gravestone in Syria, too. She also went that extra mile, in my opinion, by tracing and contacting the orphanage where my grandfather and his siblings had lived."

She continued, "The report Susan compiled for me was comprehensive, straightforward and easy for me to understand. My life has been enriched by the vast amount of information Susan's work has provided me with."

Wendy Colleary is a long-time friend who has sought Sit's help with her research.

"She is as relentless in her pursuit of historical data as any good detective would be," Colleary said. "Most of us wouldn't have the patience and tenacity required to do all the digging it takes, and she truly takes a sincere interest in her discoveries. I know when I've sat down at a computer with her to sift through my family's records, my eyes glaze over after a little bit – the old census sheets are often hard to read – but she remains laser-focused. Sue is a pretty remarkable person, having grown up abroad and traveled extensively, so she has a firsthand world view as well as a love of history. Whatever she decides she's interested in, she's all in." GL

To learn more about the Welsh Society of Western New England or Susan Davies Sit's genealogy group, contact WelshWNE@gmail.com or visit WelshWNE.com. For information about her genealogy work, email RootsRediscovered@gmail.com or visit RootsRediscovered.com.

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Business Notes

Courtesy photos

The CT River Valley Chamber of Commerce

Steve and Enza Dandeneaus

Justin Vicino

Monaco Ford will host a family safety event September 9 from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. at the dealership, 767 New London Turnpike.

Safe Kids Connecticut will perform a car seat clinic designed to help parents and children prevent injuries, and family-friendly vehicles will be on display for anyone who is interested. Free ice cream, coloring books and crayons will be available, and parents and children will receive a safety reminder handout. Families will have a chance to win a $10 gift card toward service at the dealership and various raffle prizes.

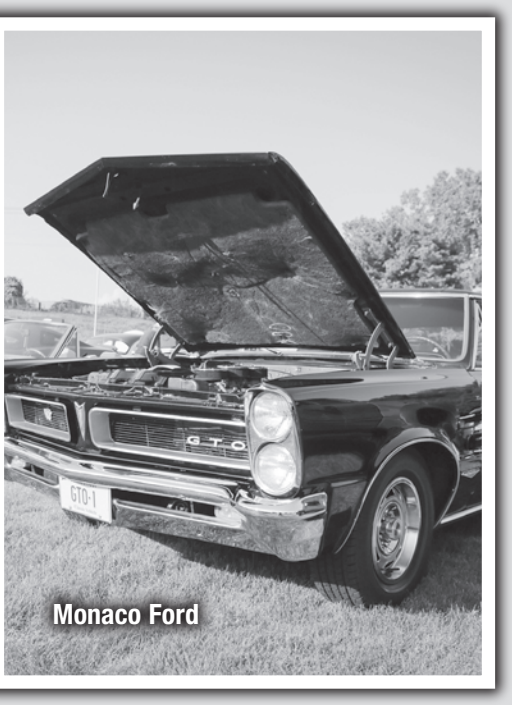
The CT River Valley Chamber of Commerce has help a ribbon-cutting to celebrate the completely renovated Glastonbury Hills Country Club. The club, at 239 Country Club Road in South Glastonbury, has an 18-hole championship golf course, 1 25-meter swimming pool, two tennis courts, a member's dining room serving lunch and dinner, and year-round social events. It is the only private golf club east of the river in Hartford County.

To learn more, call 860-633-5253 or visit glastonburyhills.com.

Justin Vicino, a mortgage banker with nearly two decades of industry experience, has joined the bank as a mortgage loan officer. He will work out of the bank's local branch.

Wendy Curry was the top listing agent for July at the local office of Berkshire Hathaway HomeServices New England Properties. **Steve and Enza Dandeneau** were the top new sales agents and **Kellee Smith** was the top agent in closings.

Monaco Ford raised $6,700 for local veterans through its sixth annual car show in August. The dealership donated all proceeds from the show to the Peter Monaco Jr. Detachment 40 of the Marine Corps League and New Haven's Post 12150 of the Veterans of Foreign Wars. GL


Monaco Ford

Wendy Curry

Kellee Smith

September calendar

Su	Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa
					1	2
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
24	25	26	27	28	29	30

5 **Town plan and zoning commission,** 7 p.m., town hall council chambers, 2155 Main St. glastonbury-ct.gov.

6 **Pooch pageant**, 6 p.m., Hubbard Green. Rain date September 7. Registration required by September 5 by calling 860-652-7679.

Glastonbury Farmers Market, 4 to 7 p.m., Hubbard Green. glastonburyfarmersmarket.com, facebook.com/GlastonburyFarmersMarket or glastonburyfarmersmarket@gmail.com

Find your Power, Find your Joy with Bridget Cooper, 6:30 p.m., Welles-Turner Memorial Library, 2407 Main St. Register at 860-652-7720 or wtmlib.com

8 **Harvest Dinner Under the Stars,** 5 p.m., Rose's Berry Farm, 295 Matson Hill Road. $150, all-inclusive. Will benefit the local CT Audubon Center. To learn more and make reserve tickets, call 860-533-8402.

9 **Book sale sponsored by the Friends of the Welles-Turner Memorial Library,** 9 a.m. to 5 p.m., front lawn of the library, 2407 Main Street. In case of rain, sale will take place in the enclosed parking deck next door at TD Bank. booksale@friendswtmlib.org or 860-652-7728.

55th On the Green Fine Art & Craft Show sponsored by Glastonbury Arts, 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. rain or shine, Hubbard Green. No charge. Free parking at Glastonbury High School with shuttle bus and at town soccer field.

10 **On the Green art show.** See September 9.

11 **Board of education,** 7:30 p.m., town hall council chambers, 2155 Main St. 860-652-7961 or glastonburyus.org.

Entrepreneurship in three easy steps, module 1, 6:30 p.m., Welles-Turner Memorial Library, 2407 Main St., $, 860-652-7720 or wtmlib.com. Registration required.

12 **Town council,** 7 p.m., town hall council chambers, 2155 Main St. 860-652-7710 or glastonbury-ct.gov.

John Humphries discusses Connecticut's clean energy future, 7:30 p.m., CT Audubon Society Center, 1361 Main St. $5. Reserve a seat by calling 860-633-8402.

13 **Glastonbury Farmers Market,** 4 to 7 p.m., Hubbard Green. glastonburyfarmersmarket.com, facebook.com/GlastonburyFarmersMarket or glastonburyfarmersmarket@gmail.com

14 **Ins and Outs of Food prep** with nutritionist Jennifer Thomas of Pop Weight Loss, 74 New London Turnpike, Suite 1. 860-918-9176.

Free ebooks, magazines and movies with RBdigital, 3 p.m., Entrepreneurship in three easy steps, module 1, 6:30 p.m., Welles-Turner Memorial Library, 2407 Main St. Registration requested. 860-652-7720 or wtmlib.com.

Fake news: can you spot it? 6:30 p.m., Welles-Turner Memorial Library, 2407 Main St. Registration requested. 860-652-7720 or wtmlib.com.

16 **Pig roast,** 5:30 p.m., Killam & Bassette Farmstead, 14 Tryon Street. $90, including tip. BYOB. All proceeds will benefit the Judy Lynch Memorial Scholarship Fund in memory of Chris Bassette's mother. Tickets available at KBFarmstead.com or by calling 860-833-0095.

PSAT, ACT and SAT practice exams, 10 a.m. to 1 p.m., Friends Room, Welles-Turner Memorial Library, 2407 Main St. Registration requested. 860-652-7720 or wtmlib.com.

17 **Farm Day** sponsored by the Historical Society of Glastonbury, 1 to 5 p.m., Welles-Shipman-Ward House, 972 Main St. No charge. 860-633-6890 or hsgct.org.

18 **Entrepreneurship in three easy steps**, module 2, 6:30 p.m., Welles-Turner Memorial Library, 2407 Main St. Registration required. 860-652-7720 or wtmlib.com.

19

Town plan and zoning commission, 7 p.m., town hall council chambers, 2155 Main St. glastonbury-ct.gov.

Computer basics: email, 3 p.m., Welles-Turner Memorial Library, 2407 Main St. Registration required. 860-652-7720 or wtmlib.com.

Overview of Medicare options, 6:30 p.m., Welles-Turner Memorial Library, 2407 Main St. Registration required. 860-652-7720 or wtmlib.com.

Natural Wonders of the Connecticut River, 6:30 p.m., CT Audubon Society Center, 1361 Main St. $5 members, $10 non-members. Register by calling 860-633-8402.

20 **Glastonbury Farmers Market,** 4 to 7 p.m., Hubbard Green. glastonburyfarmersmarket.com, facebook.com/GlastonburyFarmersMarket or glastonburyfarmersmarket@gmail.com

21 **That's Amore, outdoor opera arias and wine with the Hartford Opera Theatre**, 5:30 p.m., on the grounds of Somerset Square. No charge.

24 **Joe Carter Samba Rio Trio**, 2 p.m., Entrepreneurship in three easy steps, module 1, 6:30 p.m., Welles-Turner Memorial Library, 2407 Main St. Registration required. 860-652-7720 or wtmlib.com.

25 **Board of education,** 7:30 p.m., town hall council chambers, 2155 Main St. 860-652-7961 or glastonburyus.org.

Entrepreneurship in three easy steps, module 3, 6:30 p.m., Welles-Turner Memorial Library, 2407 Main St. Registration required. 860-652-7720 or wtmlib.com.

26 Town council, 7 p.m., town hall council chambers, 2155 Main St. 860-652-7710 or glastonbury-ct.gov.

27 **Glastonbury Farmers Market,** 4 to 7 p.m., Hubbard Green. glastonburyfarmersmarket.com, facebook.com/GlastonburyFarmersMarket or glastonburyfarmersmarket@gmail.com.

B.Y.O.C. (Bring Your Own Craft), 6:30 to 8 p.m., Welles Turner Memorial Library, 2407 Main St., $, 860-652-7720 or wtmlib.com.

28 **A Hole in the Wind with author and climate scientist David Goodrich**, 6:30 p.m., Welles-Turner Memorial Library, 2407 Main St. Registration required. 860-652-7720 or wtmlib.com.

29 **Tag sale sponsored by the Historical Society of Glastonbury,** 8 a.m. to 2 p.m., tobacco shed at Welles-Shipman-Ward House, 972 Main St. No charge. $10 for early birds from 7 to 8 a.m. 860-633-6890 or hsgct.org. Also September 30 and October 1.

Land Heritage Coalition of Glastonbury's pumpkin weigh-in, with food music and children's activities starting at 1 p.m., pumpkin drop-off 1 to 1:30 p.m., and weigh-in at 1:30 p.m., Melzen Farm Supply, 100 Oak Street. GGPP@lhcglastonbury.org or 860-633-9830.

News roundup

Halle Carroll, Coach Marty Carroll, Jamie Carroll, Coach Justin Kelleher, Liam and Brady Kelleher, and Dani Brinckman.

Courtesy photo

Brinckman helps soccer program

Glastonbury Hartford TOPSoccer Program has received a $1,000 grant due to the generosity of Glastonbury High School soccer standout Danielle Brinckman. As Gatorade Player of the year, Dani had the opportunity to select a program to receive the grant as part of the Gatorade Play It Forward program. TOPSoccer – an acronym for The Outreach Program for Soccer, is a community-based program that enables young local athletes with disabilities to learn and play soccer and be part of the Hartwell soccer family. The program was originated by US Youth Soccer and brought to town by Hartwell in 2004.

Dani, a three-year varsity started for the GHS team that went 65-1 and won three state titles, led the Tomahawks to a 20-0 record and the Class LL state championship last season, scoring nine goals and 10 assists. She has maintained a weighted 4.27 GPA and has signed a national letter of intent to play soccer on scholarship at Seton Hall University this fall.

Slates set for November

Local Republican and Democratic town committees have chosen candidates to run in the November election.

The Republican candidates for town council are incumbents Steward "Chip" Beckett III, Whit C. Osgood, Lawrence J. Byar, William T. Finn for a third term, and Kurt P. Cavanaugh and George Norman, running for a first term to replace Karen Boisvert, who is not seeking a third term. Democrats have nominated incumbents Jill Barry and Thomas Gullotta and newcomers Deb Carroll, Mary LaChance , Jake McChesney and Larry Niland.

Republicans Rosemary Coggeshall and Eric George and Democrats Doug Foyle and David Peniston are running for seats on the board of education. All but Peniston are incumbents.

Manisha Srivastava, a Democrat, is running for the board of assessment appeals against Republican David Cordone.

Democrat James McIntosh and Jennifer M. Sanford are running for the board of finance.

Sandy O'Leary and Jaye Winkler, Democrats, are running against Michael T. Fitzpatrick and Timothy Lamb on the zoning board of appeals,

Republican John Cafazzo and Rich Quagliaroli are running for the fire commission.

The local election will take place November 7.

Becoming a teacher-naturalist

The local CT Audubon Center will conduct an eight-week program to train people to serve as naturalist-teachers. The program, starting September 20 at the center, will give participants natural history and field experience in ornithology, herpetology, botany and citizen science, among others.

Classes will take place Wednesdays from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. The price is $205 for Connecticut Audubon Society members and $260 for non-members, which includes one year of membership in the society. In exchange for the reduced training fee, the center asks for a 40-hour commitment from each volunteer during the following year. To learn more, visit ctaudubon.org/center-at-glastonbury. For answers to questions, email Michelle Eckman at meckman@ctaudubon.org or call the center, 860-633-8402.

Chamber looking for festival help

Organizers of this year's Apple Harvest Festival, taking place October 13 to 15, are looking for volunteers. To learn more, visit crvchamber.org.

Roundabout work delayed

The planned roundabout at Hebron Avenue and House Street is in the final design stage and will be built next year. Pavement improvements along Hebron Avenue also will take place next year. GL

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Events spotlight

Farm Day

September 17, 1 to 5 p.m.
Welles-Shipman-Ward House, 972 Main Street, South Glastonbury
Hsgct.org or 860-633-6890

This celebration of the town's rich agricultural history will include demonstrations of weaving, sewing, shoe-making and other colonial crafts. Farm animals including horses, chickens, rabbits and goats will be on hand, and tobacco and the kitchen garden's vegetables will be harvested.

Children will be able to participate in games and other activities, including sack races, stilts, ring toss, tug of war, leap-frog and checkers. Guests will be able to tour the historic barns and sheds as well as the Welles-Shipman-Ward House.

There is no charge. General parking will be available at St. Augustine Church, 55 Hopewell Road. There is a path to the Welles-Shipman-Ward property at the rear of the parking lot. Handicap parking will be available on the Welles-Shipman-Ward property.

Natural Wonders of the Connecticut River

September 19, 6:30 p.m.
Connecticut Audubon Center is located at 1361 Main St
glastonbury@ctaudubon.org or 860-633-8402

Andrew Dasinger, a well know local environmentalist and regional board member will share his photographs, recordings, and video clips of wildlife and habitats found in the ecologically important landscape of the Connecticut River from Hartford to Middletown and will point parks and preserves along the river. Pre- registration is required. The fee is $5 for members/ and $10 for non-members.

Harvest Dinner Under the Stars

September 8, 5 p.m.
Rose's Berry Farm, 295 Matson Hill Road, South Glastonbury
860-633-8402

This annual event, hosted by Sandy Rose of Rose's Berry Farm and Bill Driggs, owner of 2hopewell Bistro, is a fundraiser for the Connecticut Audubon Society Center.

The event will start with wagon rides around the 100-acre farm and a reception with sparkling wine, followed by a five-course dinner with fresh ingredients from local sources. Each course will be paired with an appropriate wine, and live music will accompany the dinner.

Tickets are $150 per person, all-inclusive. Tables can be reserved for groups of six people. Seating is limited, and advanced reservations are a must.

55th On the Green Fine Art and Craft Show

September 9 and 10, 10 a.m. to 5 p.m., rain or shine
Hubbard Green, Main Street
Glastonburyarts.org, 860-659-1196

The town's historic Hubbard Green will become an open-air gallery again for this annual event. Visitors will find a variety of original art and hand-made crafts produced by more than 100 artists. On Saturday at 2 p.m., poets led by Glastonbury Poet Laureate Alexandrina Sergio will "paint with the written word" as they recite their poems. A food court will offer an assortment of foods, along with water and soft drinks. GL

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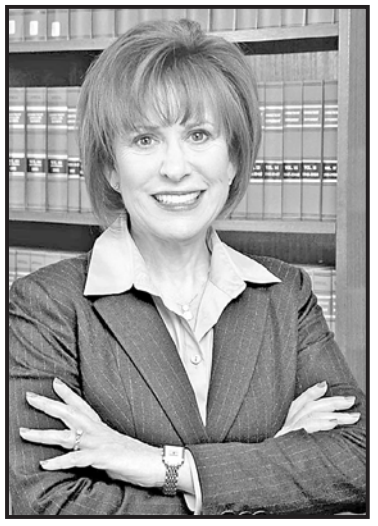

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Smoothing out the financial rollercoaster

New mortgage partnership draws on years of experience

by Nancy Thompson
Editor

At first glance, Bob Zanlungo and Kelly Turner don't have a lot in common.

She's married, he's single. Her family has been in town for generations, he moved here 11 years ago. Her background includes counseling prospective students at the University of Hartford as the director of student services at the university's engineering school. His includes working in the Clinton White House and as an aide to Terry McAuliffe, who at the time was chairman of the Democratic National Committee. But after Kelly's husband, local contractor Corey Turner, became friends with Zanlungo through the Glastonbury Rotary Club, they consulted with him to get a mortgage for their new home. The relationship grew, and she and Zanlungo opened the new Norcom Mortgage office on Main Street this spring.

Zanlungo, an only child, moved to town to be close to his parents, who lived in Eastford, and started working for the late Mike Newhouse at Advisor One Mortgage, a local brokerage.

"It was something completely different for me," he said of the mortgage industry. He enjoyed it, and after the financial crisis of 2008 resulted in fundamental changes in the business he stayed on with Newhouse at Primary Residential Mortgage, a mortgage banking company.

The difference, Zanlungo said, is that a mortgage banker is a direct lender and a mortgage broker is not. "Mortgage bankers use their own funds, or funds borrowed from a warehouse lender, to fund mortgages," he said. "A mortgage broker doesn't represent one institution, but works with many to shop for a loan for a specific individual."

A few years ago Turner was looking for a career change.

"She pestered me for about a year," Zanlungo said with a smile. She became a licensed loan officer and joined him at Prime Residential Mortgage in 2014.

Nancy Thompson photo

Bob Zanlungo and Kelly Turner have teamed up to open Norcom Mortgage Glastonbury, a mortgage banking office on Main Street.

For Turner, some aspects of mortgage counseling are similar to what she did at the university.

"I counseled prospective students about what was then the largest decision of their lives," she said. "That part is similar to the mortgage process. I liked that piece of it, that I would be able to help people buy a home." She said she does programs

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"We help you figure out what's best for you. For most people buying a home is exciting, but getting a mortgage is terrifying."

–Kelly Turner

at colleges and universities about home buying, adding, "I love the educational piece."

The two worked well together and decided to open a local branch of Norcom, an Avon-based mortgage banker also known as the Norwich Commercial Group and owned by Phil DeFronzo.

"He's been great," Zanlungo said of DeFronzo. "Norcom is a great company in the sense that they provide a service but also empower us to make smart business decisions. They always have our backs."

Turner agreed. "Phil is amazing," she said. "He has surrounded himself with great people."

For his part, DeFronzo, who has known Zanlungo for 10 years, praised both him and Turner for their commitment to their clients. "They really care about giving people the opportunity to realize the dream of home ownership," he said. "It is amazing to see how many clients that they help turn into friends."

That fits with Zanlungo's description of his job.

"We're part advisors, part friends, part educators, part tough love and part investigators," he said.

Simply put, the process goes like this.

Zanlungo or Turner meets with a client, talks about options and figures out which kind of mortgage best fits the client's lifestyle, income and long-term investment plan. Once the client is prequalified, they start the loan process, puts the package together and submits it to underwriters.

"We're advisors," Turner said. "We help you figure out what's best for you. For most people buying a home is exciting, but getting a mortgage is terrifying."

Joseph Smith worked with Zanlungo when he was buying a home in Old Lyme.

"He makes everything seem easy with his work ethic, and commitment to serving the customer," Smith said. "His sense of humor also helps. Bob is among the most outstanding young business leaders in Connecticut. He is dedicated, affable and a pleasure to be around. Buying a house can be an emotional and financial roller-coaster, and he helped tremendously in smoothing out the curves."

Zanlungo and Turner enjoy their new office across Main Street from Katz Hardware. Turner did a lot of the decorating to give the space a comfortable, homey feel.

"We like having a small-town feel," she said. "We really wanted to be a family-friendly place. We wanted to be in the town center."

In the past few months, the business has been part of several events, including an Easter egg hunt sponsored by EXIT Realty and the Norcom Cares golf tournament that raises money to be donated to charities important to the community.

"That's a great aspect of it," said Zanlungo, who is active in one of the town's BNI networking groups and the CT River Valley Chamber of Commerce in addition to the Rotary Club. "We really wanted to be part of all this." **GL**

To learn more, visit their Facebook page, Norcom Mortgage - Glastonbury, send an email to bob.zanlungo@norcom-usa.com or kelly.turner@norcom-usa.com, or call 860-633-1836. You can also follow them on their Twitter handle, @NorcomMortgageGlastonbury.

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Note from Nancy

Memories of Old Cape Cod

It's almost that time again.

We've been vacationing at Cape Cod for close to 50 years. It's beautiful, relaxing, and loads of fun. It's also filled with wonderful memories.

The first time my husband and I went to the cape was on our honeymoon. We were on our way to his great-aunt's cottage on a lake in Maine but had to wait a day to show up, so we stopped in Provincetown on the way.

Right. I know. Provincetown is far from "on the way." But I've always been challenged when it comes to directions and distances, and we drove a couple of hours out of the way to spend not quite a day there. I remember where we stayed (long gone) and where we had dinner (also gone), but not much else.

A year or two later, on the advice of a co-worker, we started staying in West Yarmouth. That lasted for a few years until we discovered Chatham, which had nicer beaches and less traffic. We continued to explore farther along the arm. Eastham was next, with the Cape Cod Rail Trail, the national seashore and Arnold's incredible onion rings.

We took our kids there for the first time in '79, when they were three and five, and for a few years they thought that particular motel was in fact "Cape Cod." One year we shopped around for a house to rent and found the perfect place about five minutes from Nauset Beach in Orleans. That lasted several years, until our daughter was old enough to have a summer job, which pretty much ended the family vacations.

But, oh, the memories. Most of them are on slides, which I converted to digital images last year. There the kids were, challenging the "smacky waves" and body-surfing at the beach, leaning against the rail on whale watches, riding bikes all over the cape, exploring the national seashore, enjoying Cape Cod League baseball, and cannon-balling into the rental house's pool. Going through those hundreds of slides was like reliving most of the 1980s and put a huge smile on my face.

We headed for the cape less often in the '90s, but even with fewer visits it continued to be a place of solace, peace and happy memories.

We started renting a vacation home again in the early 2000s, usually in Orleans, and always soon after Labor Day when the cape was less crowded, and it's become part of our lives again.

We've gone alone, with friends, and with our daughter and her family and have created a new collection of priceless memories. These days we go right after Labor Day and also for a few days in June, just before it gets crazy. For our June visit we've discovered a tiny motel overlooking Nauset Beach. It's run by the U.S. National Park Service, is straight out of the '50s including pink tile in the bathroom, and has marginal wi-fi and cell service. But it has a footpath to the beach's main entrance (and its restaurant with more amazing onion rings), an incredible view of the ocean and, for anyone who cares to get up at 5 a.m., the sunrise. We book our trip for the next year when we leave. It's that tough to get a room.

In a couple of weeks we'll be heading back to Orleans, to a rental house we enjoyed last year. It's on a beautiful lake and is smack-dab in the middle of all our favorite restaurants, walks and beaches.

I'm wondering what wonderful memories are in store this year. – *Nancy Thompson*

Nancy Thompson photos

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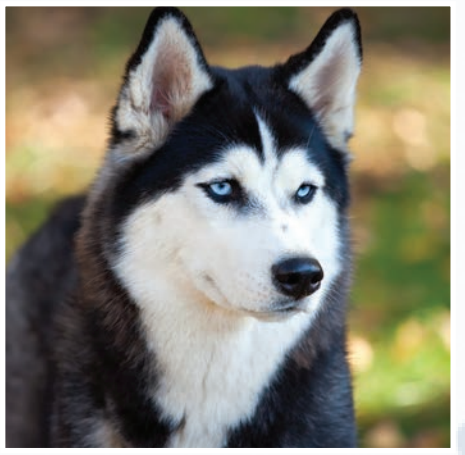

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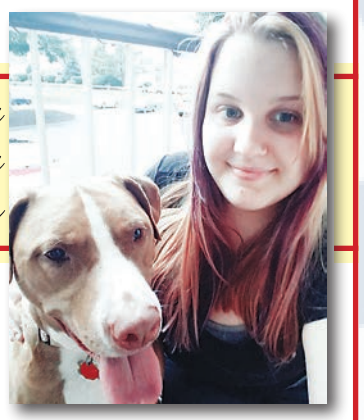

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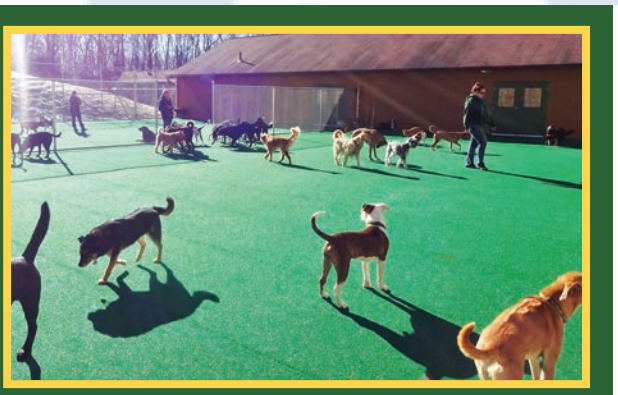

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Slice of LIFE

photos by Lisa Brisson

Glastonbury Farmers Market

1. Rob Cole and Marjorie Cooke are the market masters of the Glastonbury Farms Market. The popular market, located at the corner of Main and Hubbard streets, operates Wednesdays from 4-7 p.m.through Oct. 25. **2.** Gina LaRosa, a yoga instructor in training at Sacred Rivers Studio, leads a class of yogis on the lawn. Each week a different activity is planned at the Glastonbury Farmers Market. **3.** Grace Kenney, an educator and naturalist at the Connecticut Audubon Society, shows the crowd Cookie, an injured Barred owl who has called the center home since 2014. **4.** Two-year-old Oliver Saylor has a blast with his balloon animal. **5.** Police Sgt. Jeff Hodder lets Claire Witinski, 8, sit on his motorcycle. **6.** Every kind of fruit and vegetable can be found at the Glastonbury Farmers Market, with most being grown in Glastonbury. **7.** Nancy Hayden, owner of Ginger & Pickles, and her staff sell out of their deliciously buttery rich freshly baked cookies wherever they go. **8.** Granny's Pie Factory of East Hartford is a familiar sight at many local farmers markets, and Irene Young is happy to let market-goers taste any pie, including chocolate cream, 5-berry, apple, peach and blueberry and more. **9.** The Glastonbury Farmers Market regularly features musicians who entertain the crowds. **10.** Patrick Geaslin of Killam & Bassett Farmstand bags some fresh ears of corn for a customer. **11.** Gordon Bednarz sells some of his tasty tomatoes. **12.** Julia Mendak and Ella Fioletor happily sample some of Ginger & Pickles cookies. **13.** Clayton Becket of Beckett Farms brings out some more produce from his Main Street farm for the market's customers. **14.** Valentina Limo, 3, is excited about tasting her ear of butter and sugar corn on the cob.

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FALL *Arts*

Photo by Mara Dresner

Paola Dumeer learned to sew from family members.

Creating memories one stitch at a time

From birth to death Paola Dumeer sews special gifts

by Mara Dresner
Staff Writer

Sewing is almost an inherited trait for Paola Dumeer.

Her grandmother, who was born in Italy and lived there until moving to the States in the 60s, sewed all her own clothes.

"It was always around me. The sewing machine was always set up. She worked as a dressmaker in the south end of Hartford. Needlework was always a part of her life," said Dumeer, who grew up in Hartford. "My aunt came over in the 70s from Italy. She was a trained seamstress. She sews without patterns. She puts up the most beautiful things. She did my entire bridal party. My mother did hand embroidery. She died very young. So I've always been surrounded by all these things; it's always been very dear to me."

That doesn't mean she's always had a strong interest in learning the work. As a teen she didn't quite have the patience to learn the intricacies of the craft.

"I would sit with my aunt on occasion and she would have me hand-hem the skirts she was making, just to learn the process of sewing. I always wanted to learn, but I wanted to go straight to the cutting of fabric! Usually I would lose interest and something else would come around," Dumeer said. "Because I was raised around this, I remember her talking with her friends. It was piece

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FALL *Arts*

Paola Dumeer designed these pillows from the uniform of a state trooper who died.

work. I remember the discussion of what it was like to work on the factory floor. It took me a long time to come around to be proud of the talents of the women around me. It wasn't until I was an adult that I realized many women didn't have these talents anymore."

Despite her love of crafts, Dumeer set out on a career in accounting.

"I took an accounting class in high school and really enjoyed it. Crafting was always just crafting at that point. I never even thought of it [as a career]," she said. "I was constantly at war with myself between that side of me and the creative side of me. It was hard for me to let go and give myself artistic license. I seem to be wired where debits equals credits."

One of the crafts she first got her back on the path is one that's known for precision: quilting.

"I was always drawn to the colors and patterns of the quilts. It wasn't until I had my first child that someone gifted me a handmade quilt and I thought, 'I can do this.' I took one class. Slowly, I learned everything, from a book really," she said. "The reputation of quilting is that it's so precise, there are rules. Well, there are no quilt police. Do what makes your heart sing. I love making them pretty but they serve a purpose."

As Dumeer's two children – she has a college-aged son and a daughter at Glastonbury High School – got older, she found herself making items to give as birthday presents.

"I would make gifts and they were always really well received. People would say, 'You should sell these,' or, 'Would you make me one of these?' And I finally thought, 'Let's take it to market,' and here we are," she explained.

About four years ago, she bought a large embroidery machine.

"Originally it was just embroidery services. I would embellish things and sell them. Slowly, I began to do more handmade items. It has evolved for me and has continued to evolve," she said.

Even now, she's learning to make dolls and drapes, and do clothing alterations.

One niche she's found is making memory gifts, such as a quilt made of favorite T-shirts.

"People bring me articles of clothing from departed loved ones and I've made that into quilts. That's been really special for me," Dumeer said.

Stuffed animals embroidered with the baby's name and date of birth are one of Paola Dumeer's popular gift items.

Courtesy photos

While Kristi Vitelli of Glastonbury first saw Dumeer's memory gifts, she didn't realize that she soon would be in need of one.

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FALL *Arts*

items when she received a request to make keepsakes for family members from the clothing of a recently deceased family member last fall. She showed me the items she created either at the end of October or beginning of November. I was very impressed with her creations from clothing and thought that it was a great way to remember a deceased relative. Then on November 22, my 56-year-old brother died suddenly of a pulmonary embolism. It was a very sad time, but I knew a way to make it better for my brother's daughter, my father and my sister who was with my brother when he died, who were all especially traumatized by his sudden death. I asked my sister to ship me two boxes of my brother's clothes, per instructions from Paola of what would be best for the projects. With my brother's shirts and pants Paola made two beautiful quilts, one for my niece and one for my father. With a sweatshirt she made a pillow for my sister. I sent the quilt to my niece for Christmas, and even though she has been estranged from our family for several years, she called me and thanked me for the quilt to remember her daddy. It was a wonderful moment for me. We now keep in contact and I credit the quilt. I gave the quilt to my father for his 80th birthday in February and he was so grateful to have something to hold from his only son. Paola still has a red shirt from my brother that she is going to use to make heart-shaped Christmas ornaments that I will send to relatives this Christmas and keep one for me," said Vitelli, who has known Dumeer since their kids were in grammar school.

"What impresses me most about Paola's work is that she creates items that are unique and perfect for the situation. Her attention to detail is amazing. Paola is a perfectionist. When I received the boxes of my brother's clothes, we went through them all together, which was hard, but she was very careful to consider the situation," Vitelli added. "I told her that I wanted two quilts, a casual one for my young and non-traditional niece, and a traditional quilt for my father whose grandmother had sewn over 100 quilts during her lifetime. Paola helped pick the appropriate clothing to use for each quilt. She also suggested the pillow for my sister and the Christmas ornaments based upon what she found in the boxes. She was so sensitive to everything and even asked if we wanted any of the remaining pieces of material returned. Paola's beautiful creations mean so much to me and my family, and have made positive memories from a very sad event."

Paola Dumeer customizes gifts, such as these towels, with names and designs.

Courtesy photo

Many of her gifts are for happier occasions.

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Mary Kay Kemper of Glastonbury connected with Dumeer through an entrepreneurial group she co-facilitated in Manchester, and often purchases baby gifts from her.

"She is for sure my go-to person. The theme at my company is the unicorn, it's sort of a team mascot. Whenever of our teammates has a baby, I have her do a stuffed animal with the child's name and date of birth. I always let Paola run with the idea. I tell her a little bit about the parents of the child, whether they're Irish or love sports; or for me, it's the beauty business. She always has over-exceeded my expectations" said Kemper, who has a makeup and skincare company. "Working with her is just a dream. She does everything with love and extreme detail and thoughtfulness."

Dumeer has also created wall art for Kemper's daughters. Kemper said that when she needs a one-of-a-kind gift, that's where she turns.

"She did a Christmas present for my sister-in-law, who is a very difficult person to shop for," she said. "She kind of has everything. She did the most beautiful Irish linen napkins. She monogramed them for my brother and sister-in-law and did shamrocks, and they were absolutely stunning. That's one of my favorites. My sister-in-law is so in love with that gift; she still talks about those napkins," Kemper said.

All of her items are custom made, although Dumeer is considering ways to create gift items with more universal appeal. Most of her customers come by word of mouth or online from sites such as Facebook, Instagram and Etsy.

One of her biggest challenges was simply coming up with her company name. It took a while before she settled on "Vineyard Thimble."

"That was so hard," she said. "I'm very drawn to circular objects like grapes and I find myself gravitating toward grape leaf designs, grapevine embroidery. Hopefully, it's a boutique sort of name. So I just moved to 'vineyard,' and then to 'thimble.' No matter you think of, you'd look it up and someone already had it."

She enjoys working with her clients to create special gifts.

"I like that we go about the design process together," she said. "I like watching my customers be able to realize an idea that they just didn't know how to put together. It's really rewarding to create a memory for someone."

Of course, that makes it tough to do her own crafts.

"When you sew for others, there's no time to sew for yourself. I try to make mini projects that are just for me that feed my soul," she said. "I try to sew every day; it keeps me thinking. It keeps me in that creative process."

She often comes up with new products based on customer requests. As people began asking for more handmade items, she got away from the embroidery. She does still work with small businesses, who might just want a few logo items and can't afford the minimum number of items that a larger company would require.

She often hearkens back to the lessons she learned when she was younger.

"I try to give attention to detail. That's one thing my aunt drilled into me," she said. "I try to keep in mind it's the process not always the product, I try to enjoy the process. I love watching it come together. I had a woman whose husband died and she had three young daughters. She brought me her husband's wardrobe, almost everything. I made three quilts using his t-shirts and his jeans. It took forever. I took apart his jeans and put them back together. It was so rewarding, even though it can be so tedious taking apart jeans, but she couldn't have done it for herself."

Through that project came another special project, a woman whose husband, a state police officer, had died. She brought Dumeer his uniforms.

"They just sat here for a while. I didn't know what to do with them," she said before making variety of pillows and Christmas ornaments. "That woman distributed them throughout the family. They were so moved to have a memory like that. That just really spoke to me."

Knowing that she's creating gifts with meaning is special for Dumeer.

"Together, we can create something that is truly unique. People have ideas what they would like to have, but they just don't know how to go about it," she said. "Working together, they can help me understand what they are looking for and I can start giving them what they want. That's what I like." **GL**

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10/28 **The Jason Bishop Show** - *illusion*

11/9 **Moscow State Symphony** - *Wagner, Schumann, Sibelius*
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11/11 **Mark O'Connor** - *A Bluegrass Cabaret Event*
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11/30 **Comedian John Mulaney** - *Kid Gorgeous*

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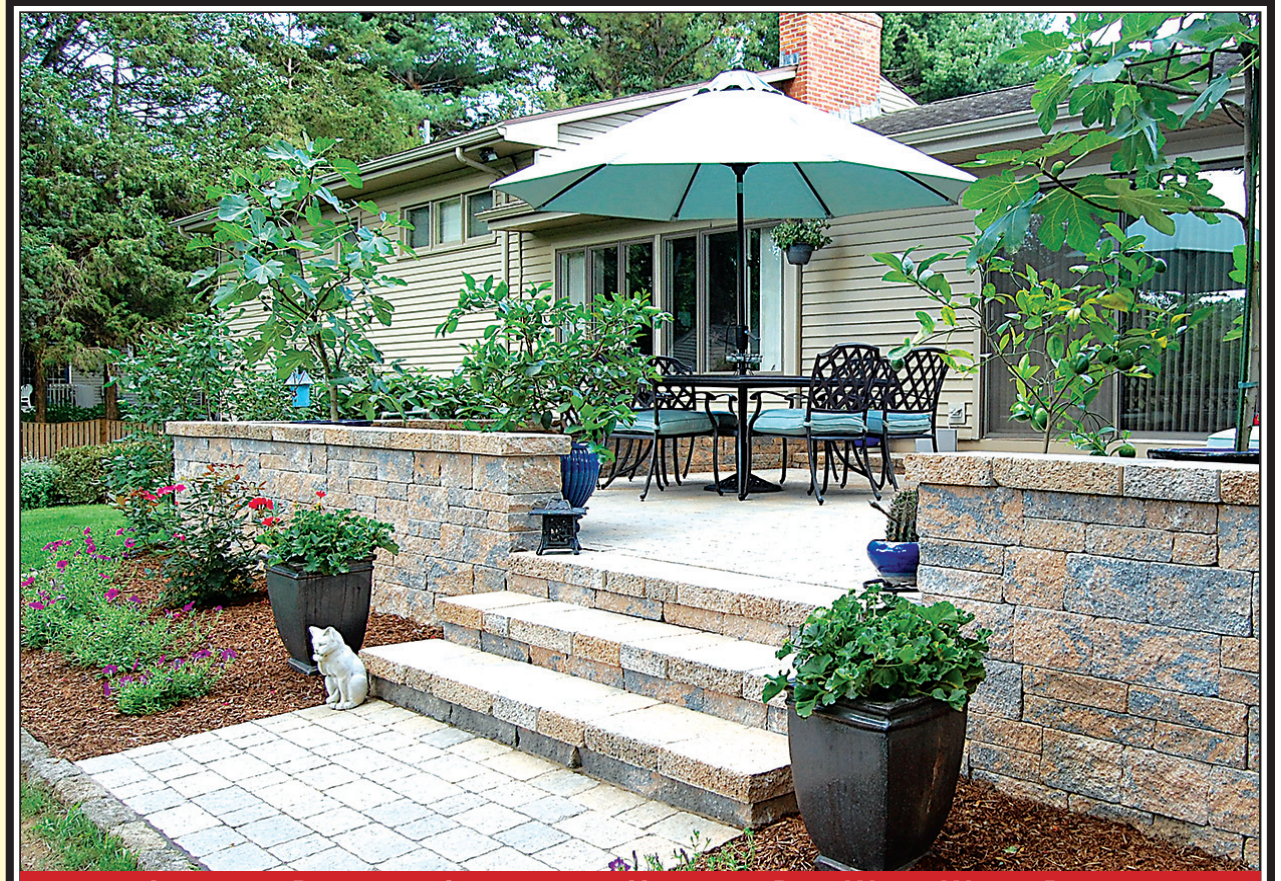

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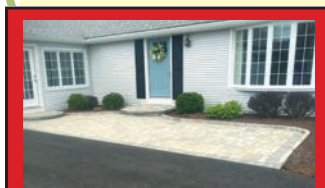

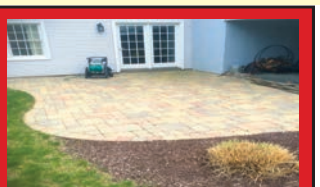

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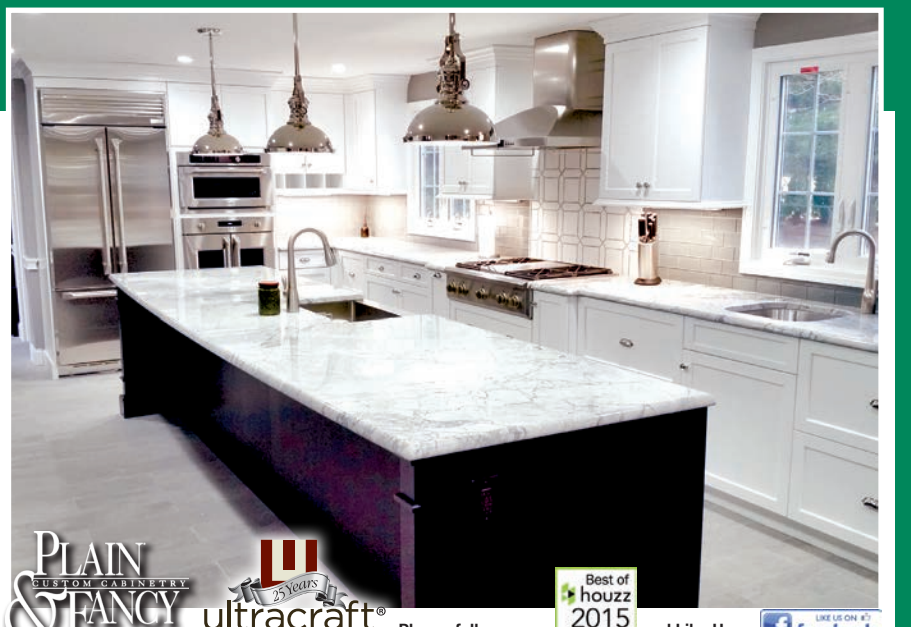

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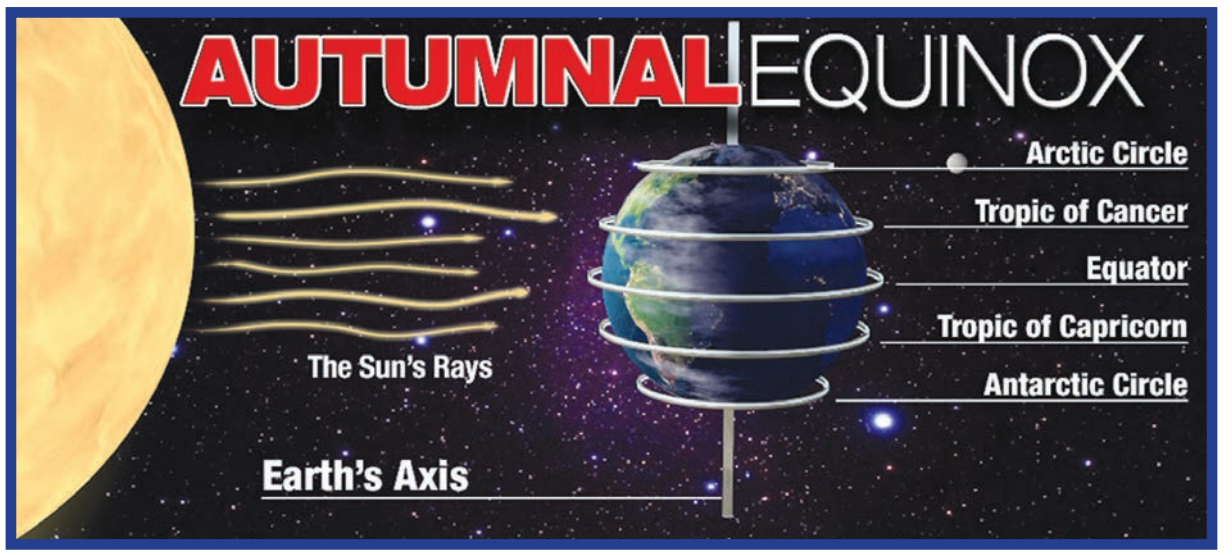

Goodbye summer, hello autumn!

This month we transition from Summer to Fall. Tough for those of you who may enjoy heat and humidity, but a welcome change for those who like cooler, shorter days. The Autumnal Equinox occurs this year on the 22nd of this month, at 4:02 p.m.

Now the term "equinox" is Latin, referring to the days of the year when there is nearly equal day and equal night – when the Earth's axis is not tilting in either direction toward or away from the Sun (also occurring in March with the transition from winter to spring).

However, the exact timing is more of an approximate - on the 22nd we will actually have 12 hours and 10 minutes of possible daylight (sunrise 6:38 a.m., sunset 6:48 p.m.). Also, it is important to point out, with regard to sunrise/set, these times are relative to when the upper edge of the Sun crosses the horizon (not the center).

To go more in-depth, the equinox occurs when the Sun crosses the celestial equator, from north to south – when the Sun is at the halfway point, between summer and winter. Of course, this is relevant only to the Northern Hemisphere. In the Southern Hemisphere, it would be the opposite; meaning, those south of the equator will be saying goodbye to winter and hello to spring. **GL**

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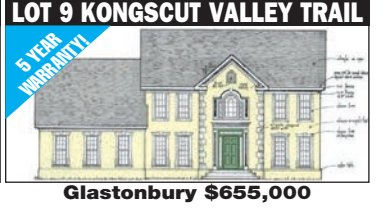
114 KONGSCUT VALLEY TRAIL

Glastonbury $679,900

LOT 9 KONGSCUT VALLEY TRAIL



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Tough transitions

How to handle the new faces and places that make going back to school overwhelming

by Alicia B. Smith, Mara Dresner and Allie Rivera
LIFE Staff

School years are filled with numerous transitions for students and parents alike. Each fall brings new opportunities for learning, new challenges, new classmates, new teachers and increased responsibilities. Navigating these changes can be challenging, but area experts also have tips for smoothly sailing on to each new horizon.

Middle school to high school

"Ninth grade is a tough transition," Mario Almeida, principal of Rocky Hill High School, said. "For most kids, it's a brand new building so it's important to start off on the right foot."

In many districts, the shift from a middle school setting to high school can be a particularly difficult transition due in large part to extended freedom and responsibility.

"Middle school students, at least in Rocky Hill, are on a team, so they don't really leave the confines of that team," Almeida said. "At the high school you're travelling on your own. You're given a lot of freedom and you're also given a lot of room to make some mistakes."

Along with those additional responsibilities within the school building, students at the high school level are also responsible for their own academic progress, making time management an important skill to develop.

"You've got to put some time every night into some homework, and if you don't have homework, you have to study for that quiz or exam that's coming up," Almeida said. "Waiting until last minute to study for an exam is not going to fly at the high school."

Although students are given more responsibilities at this level, Almeida stressed that no student should feel they are tackling new challenges alone. There are a great deal of resources at the school for those who may feel they are struggling to adjust, either academically or socially, however students need to be proactive in seeking out help.

"Don't wait until you're failing to speak up," Almeida said. "Ask your teacher for help. When kids take the initiative to go see their teachers, the teachers are of course going to help."

Should students feel that going to their teacher isn't an option, Almeida stressed the importance of finding someone else in the school.

"If you're struggling or having a hard time going to your teacher, at least go to your guidance counselor," he said. "They can at least be able to facilitate."

In addition to making strides academically, Almeida said that it is important for students to feel as though they are connected to their school by getting involved.

"My biggest advice that

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Back *to* School

I give to parents and kids is that the school has got so many clubs," he said.

"Get involved in some type of extracurricular. It doesn't just have to be sports. There's theater, marching band, chess club, Model U.N., there's so many things that they can get involved with."

By getting involved in school activities, students not only feel more connected to their school but also get the opportunity to meet others they may not have necessarily met in their classrooms.

"Academic achievement is improved when you're involved in extracurricular activities," Almeida said.

At Rocky Hill High School, as well as at many other schools throughout the state, incoming ninth-grader students have the opportunity to attend freshmen orientation.

"I think that's huge for them to attend," Almeida said. "They get to have a tour of the school and meet some of our upperclassmen. It's really a positive way to start off the year."

In West Hartford, Hall High School students are welcomed by Hall's Link Crew – part of a nationwide program that welcomes freshmen and makes them feel comfortable throughout their first year of high school.

Students from junior and seniors classes are trained to be mentors and serve as positive role models, mentors and student leaders who guide the freshmen through what it takes to be successful in high school.

Public to private school

While most of the students at Westminster School in Simsbury are day students from the surrounding communities, they can expect some private school traditions that may be different from the environment at a public school.

One of the most startling changes students may have to adjust to, according to Jon Deveaux, dean of admissions and enrollment management at the school, is the class size.

"Smaller classes mean students need to come prepared, need to have done their homework and come ready to participate," Deveaux

Being in a new school can seem daunting to children, but help is available for students to learn the logistics and become involved in the school community.

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said, adding that class size is typically about 12 students versus the 20 or 25 that is more common in public schools. "The expectation on each student is much higher. You have to come ready to participate."

In addition, the school has a strict dress code to which students are required to adhere.

Another difference students may encounter in this private school setting is the expectation for them to become involved in non-academic activities, such as sports, theater, dance or a club.

"Every season, every afternoon, every student is involved," Deveaux said.

At Kingswood Oxford, a private day school in West Hartford, students and their families are often familiar with the school as they likely attended campus events during the administrative process.

The school, however, offers a robust orientation program for all new students and their families.

"All new students are part of some type of program prior to the first day of school, which usually put those nerves at ease for them," Rebecca Benavides, senior associate director of admissions said. "Every student at our school has an advisor, which is a faculty member, and they have met that advisor before the first day of school, that person stays with them through the year."

The majority of students who attend the school are coming in from a public school.

Each new family that comes to K-O is introduced to a mentor family which will reach out to the new family before the start of school to help them with any questions they may have from things like what do I wear to what do I need to bring?

"I think they do an excellent job of making new families feel comfortable," Benavides said.

Transitions for parents

So, your child is settled at school or into his or her first apartment. Now what? One of the toughest transitions is often for parents when they become empty nesters.

"I think people have to be prepared for this. You have to figure things change when everybody leaves. Think of it as an opportunity more than a loss. You have to figure out what do to with more free time. You need to focus more on your marriage, your relationship with your friends; that takes conscious effort. It's very easy to feel disrupted with it, to feel upset," Geri Pearson, a nurse practitioner and associate professor, psychiatry, UConn School of Medicine, explained.

She's not just speaking from theory. Her youngest child – her children range in age from almost 33 to 20 – just moved out.

"You're left back with your spouse, back the way it started. You're missing all the noise. It's quieter; there's no question. I had to get used to it all. Groceries aren't as expensive. That's the thing that's really funny; groceries are half what they were," she said with a laugh.

Parents often start to see themselves in a different light.

"I think it brings your age into focus. When we have kids in the house, we still think we're young. When you don't have any kids in your house, you think, 'I'm moving into another phase in life,' which is OK," Pearson, said.

She said that most people will get past the empty nest period with a little time.

"If people end up feeling really disrupted and it lasts months and months, they need to get some counseling; they need to figure out why," she said.

And while Pearson's own children live in Connecticut and they text every day, she admits it's not quite like having them under the same roof.

"I really miss my kids," she said. "The hardest for us is figuring out how much to cook! Life is simpler without all these people in the house but also a little lonely." **GL**

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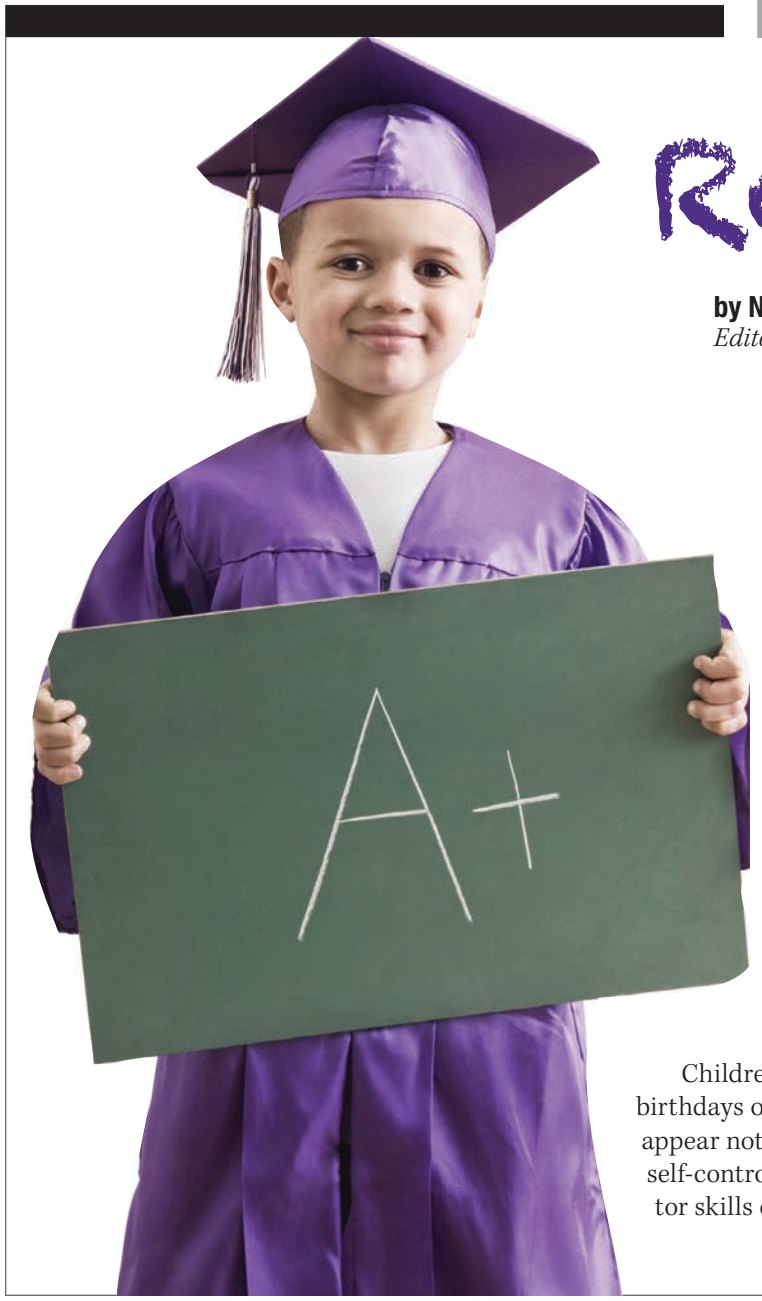

Ready or not?

Knowing if your child is ready for graduation to kindergarten is not always easy

by Nancy Thompson
Editor

For some parents, sending a child to kindergarten is a simple decision. There is no doubt the child is ready, emotionally, physically and developmentally. For others, it's not so clear-cut.

Children with late birthdays or who may appear not to have the self-control, the fine-motor skills or other abilities to help them succeed in kindergarten can present their parents with a tough choice.

Experts in early childhood development and curriculum directors in the area have offered their thoughts and suggested links to help parents decide whether to hold a child out, perhaps enrolling him or her in a Pre-K class, or to send the child to kindergarten "on time."

It's about more than academics.

"I don't like the 'Your child must be able to…' stuff," said Rosemary Tralli, curriculum director for the Glastonbury Public Schools. "Kindergarten is all about building foundational skills. We hope children come in with self-help skills and we do want to see some self-regulation, but the rest of it can be taught. We want them to be ready to receive instruction. We go by the law and its residency and age requirements."

She agreed that it's not always simple. "Some parents do come in concerned and want to talk about it," she said. "It's hard to make the decision one way or the other."

Irene Garneau, West Hartford's early childhood curriculum specialist, and Kerry Jones, director of the town's elementary curriculum, said they believe it's more important to consider signs that a child is ready to go to kindergarten.

"While many may associate 'school readiness' as knowing numbers, letters, and colors, we highlight with families of entering kindergarten students the important of executive functioning and social-emotional self-regulation skills," they said in a joint statement.

They defined self-regulation skills as enabling a child to pay attention, delay gratification, switch

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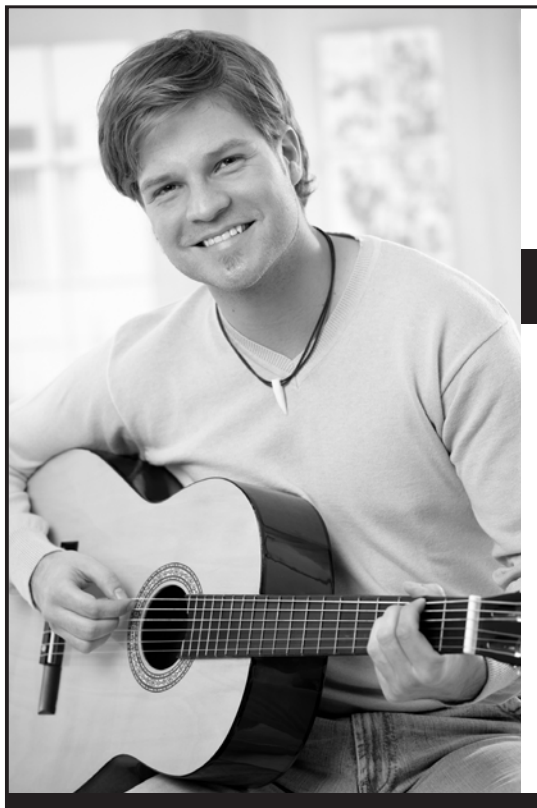

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Where to look for help

Our experts suggested talking with a child's preschool teacher or pediatrician or the principal of the school the child will be attending.

Online resources include:
CT State Department of Education, ct.sde.gov, for information about early learning and kindergarten curriculum
The Connecticut Association for the Education of Young Children, CTAEYC.org
The National Association for the Education of Young Children, NAEYC.org
The Connecticut Office of Early Childhood, ct.gov/oec
Help Me Grow, a national organization started in Connecticut and now in 27 states, helpmegrownational.org

between tasks, transition between activities and control their emotions. "Early childhood research, as well as our experience in working with young children, provides compelling evidence of the critical link between social/emotional development and behavior and school academic success. Providing young children with rich experiences and vocabulary provides a strong foundation for future learning. This may occur with the family or in a high-quality Pre-K setting, or even better, both."

Barbara Hartigan, an association professor in the School of

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Education at the University of Saint Joseph and chairman of the school's early childhood special education program, said it's important to look at the whole child when considering readiness skills for kindergarten.

"Parents think that school is all about cognitive development – learning, thinking and problem-solving – however, there are also social and emotional factors that play a huge role in success in school. Also, a child's movement, physical development and health are important aspects to consider. Language and communication are also important elements of a child's successful school experience."

She said research shows that "redshirting," or waiting to start kindergarten a year later, seems to have positive implications for future athletes, but asks, "How do we know that these young children are going to be elite athletes?"

Hartigan said that while parents tend to hold back children born late in the year or boys, who often mature more slowly than girls, to give them another year to mature, studies indicate that higher test scores and more mature behavior for children who have started kindergarten a year late are generally not seen past third grade.

She said research also shows that children with disabilities are more likely to be held back from kindergarten, a move that concerns her because it can deny them important early intervention by specialists.

"I worry that children's special needs will not be addressed if they do not have access to specific training from specialists such as speech therapists or occupational therapists," she said. "Parents may keep their children out of school in hopes that these skills will develop when in fact they would benefit from working with a professional on specific skills."

In Newington, Deputy Superintendent Pamela Muraca and Assistant Superintendent Wendy Crouse said the town's schools provide personalized early learning experiences for all students, and that all who meet the age requirements set by the state are welcome, although parents may consider other factors.

"Enrolling a child in kindergarten for some families is a personal decision based on the parent's experiences in school, the desire to have their child at home for another year, experiences of older siblings or redshirting," they said.

Revised kindergarten curriculums that put more emphasis on academic skills shouldn't be a problem, experts say.

"Our job is to teach them where they are," Tralli said. "We give them a love of learning. It's important that they love being there, and that we're affirming. They learn through play and authentic kinds of things, such as walking down the hall, left verses right, learning to love books, how to open a book and how to turn pages, playing with the food store. Play is the vehicle in kindergarten. They learn about feelings, about "me and my world."

Garneau agreed. "The Common Core and kindergarten curriculum have changed the kindergarten experience from what many of us remember from our own childhoods," she said. "It's important to remember that the Common Core standards focus on academic development and cognitive development/habits of mind – mathematical concepts, foundational literacy skills, perseverance. Developmentally, kindergarteners still need opportunities for hands-on learning and play-based experiences in which they can apply their new academic learning. Full-day kindergarten experiences and learning expectations are important, foundational starting points for children's academic developmental progression during the elementary years."

"A good teacher and program will differentiate to meet the individual child's needs," Hartigan said.

All agreed that in the end, the decision to send a child on time or to wait is up to the parents.

"There's no right or wrong, no one way to look at this," Tralli said. **GL**

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HOW TO IDENTIFY AND STOP

Today's students have many new things to contend with as they navigate the school year. As a greater number of schools transition to providing lessons, homework and tests on digital devices, students spend much more time online. This connectivity can have many positive results. However, the same availability also opens up students of all ages to various dangers.

One of these dangers is a more invasive form of bullying called "cyberbullying." The global organization DoSomething.org says nearly half of kids have been bullied online, with one in four saying it has happened more than once.

Cyberbullying has grown as access to computers and devices that offer an online connection has grown. Bullying is now just as likely to occur online as it is on the playground. Since cyberbullying tends to target emotions and mental well-being, and reaches beyond the school campus into a student's home, its impact can be even more serious.

According to the Megan Meier Foundation, which campaigns against bullying, peer victimization during adolescence is associated with higher rates of depression, suicide ideation and suicide attempts. In the United States, suicide is the second leading cause of death for individuals between the ages of 15 and 24, according to data compiled from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, the Center for Behavioral Health Statistics, and the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration.

Cyberbullying occurs in many different forms.

• Flaming: This is a type of bullying that occurs in an online forum or group conversation. It's achieved by sending angry or insulting messages directly to the person. Flaming is similar to harassment, but harassment usually involves privately sent messages.

• Outing: This type of bullying is a sharing of personal and private information about a person publicly. When information has been disseminated throughout the Internet, one has been "outed."

• Fraping: Fraping occurs when someone logs into another's social media account and impersonates him or her. This could be a child or an adult impersonating the person and posting inappropriate content in his or her name. Sometimes this type of bullying is also called "posing" or "catfishing."

• Masquerading: Masquerading occurs when bullies create fake profiles so they can harass someone anonymously. The bully is likely someone the person being targeted knows well.

• Exclusion: Sometimes direct targeting is not necessary. Students can be bullied simply by being deliberately left out, such as not being invited to parties or encouraged to participate online conversations.

Securing privacy online is one way to prevent cyberbullying attacks. Students also can be selective about whose social media friendships they accept.

Students should stick together and report instances of cyberbullying if it becomes an issue. **GL**

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